

**Perceptions of Senior Academics and Postgraduate Students on the
Decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning
Institution in South Africa**

by

JULLIET MUNYARADZI

**submitted in accordance with the requirements for
the degree of**

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

in the subject DIDACTICS

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR TV MANYIKE

JANUARY 2022

DECLARATION

Name: JULLIET MUNYARADZI

Student number: 55366864

Degree: **Ph.D (Perceptions of Senior Academics and Postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning Institution in South Africa)**

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



SIGNATURE

January 2022

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the people who have made tremendous contributions towards the completion of my thesis.
2. I am particularly grateful for the assistance given by my supervisor, Professor TV Manyike. Throughout my research journey, you have mentored and given me the continuous support and knowledge needed to tackle a dissertation of this scope. Your feedback has always been prompt, rich and constructive. I could not have asked for a better supervisor for both my Master of Education and the current degree.
3. My special thanks go to my brother, Tavonga Munyaradzi, for the encouragement and support he gave me throughout the research journey. May God bless you!
4. I appreciate the support that I got from my sisters and friends in sparing their time to be there for me in my times of need.
5. I also extend my gratitude to Professor EM Lemmer for editing this thesis.
6. Lastly, but not least, I extend my appreciation to every research participant who took part in this study. It would not have been possible without you!
7. From the bottom of my heart, I say to you all, here is our thesis!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved mother, Ratidzai Munyaradzi (nee Magodora) and my late father, Mhondiwa J. Munyaradzi.

ABSTRACT

The dominance of Western hegemony in higher education curricula has resulted in debates both locally and globally about possible means to redress the injustices associated with Eurocentric worldviews in higher education research, teaching and learning. The decolonisation agenda has thus become topical in postcolonial university contexts and other higher education institutions across the world, driven by lack of equity of access and success amongst most indigenous students and other marginalised students. Decolonisation debates have also influenced the attempts to decolonise university curricula in most postcolonial universities worldwide. Using literature review, document analysis, semi-structured individual telephonic interviews and an online qualitative questionnaire, this interpretive phenomenological qualitative intrinsic case study explored perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an Open Distance eLearning (ODeL) institution in South Africa, the University of South Africa (UNISA). Derrick Bell's interest convergence principle and Ladson-Billings and Tate's critical race theory (CRT) of education were used as theoretical lenses to inform the study and frame the analysis. A purposeful, snowballing sample of sixteen senior academics and twelve postgraduate students was selected. A document analysis included UNISA's key policy documents: Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy; Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 and 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy; ODeL Policy; and Student Funding Policy. The results revealed UNISA aimed at decolonising its curriculum through centring African epistemologies and other marginalised knowledges. The results further revealed that this has been partly achieved through the implementation of indigenous African languages to scaffold learning, drafting of policies to guide the decolonisation agenda, monitoring the implementation process, renaming university buildings and using technology to enhance equity and access. The results further revealed that postgraduate students are unaware of the decolonisation agenda which is implemented in this ODeL institution. The study recommends that indigenous official languages be used as media of instruction at a qualification level. It is further recommended that funds be availed for the successful implementation of decolonised

curricula. Lastly, the institution should find creative ways of ensuring that its postgraduate students are aware of the transformation development.

Key words

Africanisation of curriculum, coloniality in higher education, critical race theory, curriculum transformation, decolonisation, decoloniality, decolonisation of university curriculum, indigenous knowledge systems, language policy, Open Distance eLearning, perceptions, postgraduate students, senior academics

Imibono Yabafundi Abadala kanye NabaFundi Beziqo Ezifundweni Zokuqedwa Kobukholoni Kwekharikhulamu Yenyuvesi eNingizimu Afrika.

ISIFINQO

Ukubusa kombuso waseNtshonalanga kukharikhulamu yemfundo ephakeme kuye kwaphetha ngokuba ezingxoxweni, endaweni kanye nasemhlabeni wonke, mayelana nezindlela ezingaba khona zokulungisa ukungabi nabulungisa okuhlobene nemibono yomhlaba yeYurosentrikhi ocwaningweni lwemfundo ephakeme, ukufundisa kanye nokufunda. Ngakho-ke i-ajenda yokuqeda ubukholoni ibe yisihloko ezimeni zamanyuvesi abhekelele okubhekana nokwenzeka ngemuva kobukholoni nakwezinye izikhungo zemfundo ephakeme emhlabeni wonke, iqhutshwa ukuntuleka kokufinyeleleka nempumelelo phakathi kwabafundi abanengi bomdabu kanye nabanye abafundi ababenganakiwe. Izimpikiswano zokuqeda ubukholoni nazo zibe nomthelela emizamweni yokuqeda izifundo zamanyuvesi emanyuvesi amaningi ayebhekene nokuqedwa kobukholoni obenzeke ngemuva emhlabeni jikelele. Lesi sifundo esichazayo ngokumangalisayo kocwaningo eliyikhwalthi lwezigameko zangaphakathi sisebenzise ukubuyekezwa kwezincwadi, ukuhlaziya okubhaliwe, izingxoxo zocingo ezihleliwe kanye nemibuzo eyingqayizivele nge – inthanethi ukuze kuhlolwe imibono yabafundi esigungwini esiphezulu nabafundi abaphothule izifundo ezithile ngokuqedwa kobukholoni kwekharikhulami zaseNyuvesi esikhungweni eNingizimu Afrika, eNyuvesi yaseNingizimu (UNISA). Isimiso sikaDerrick Bell sokuguqula kanye nethiyori yohlanga olubucayi kaLadson (CRT) yemfundo sasisetshenziswa njengama thiyori elenzi acatshangelwayo ukuze azise lokhu kuhlola futhi ahlele ukuhlaziya. Kwakhethwa isampula elinenjongo, eliyisinobholi lezazi eziyi - zabafundi abessezingeni eliphezulu nabafundi abayi - abphothule izifundo zabo. Ukuhlaziya umbhalo kwakuhlanganisa imibhalo eyinhloko yemigomo ye - UNISA: Isu Lokuguqula Elinganisiwe; Isu le-UNISA 2030; Isitatimende Sombono Nempokophelelo; 2018 noMbiko Yonyaka Odidiyelwe wonyaka wezi- 2019; Umgomo Wolimi wonyaka wezi- 2016; Inqubo ye - ODeI kanye Nomgomo Wokuxhasa Izimali Zabafundi. Imiphumela iveze obala ukuthi i-UNISA ihlose ukuqeda uhlelo lwayo lobukholoni lwezifundo ngokuhlanganisa ama – ephistemoloji ase - Afrika nolunye ulwazi olwabe lukhishelwe eceleni futhi lunganakiwe. Imiphumela ibuye yaveza ukuthi lokhu ngokwengxenywe

kuye kwafinyelelwa ngokusebenzisa izilimi zabomdabu zase - Afrika ukuze kuvezwe ukufunda okushaqisayo; izimiso zokuqoqa ukuze kuqondiswe izimiso zokuqoqa ukuze kwethule kwe ajenda yokuqedwa kobukholoni; ukuqapha inqubo yokusetshenziswa kokuthile; ukuqamba kabusha izakhiwo zaseyunivesithi nokusebenzisa ubuchwepheshe ukuze kuthuthukise ukulingana nokukwazi ukungena lapho. Imiphumela ibuye yaveza nokuthi abafundi abaphothule izifundo ezithile abanalo ulwazi ngokuqedwa kodaba lobukholoni esetshenziswa kulenhlango ye - ODeL. Ucwango Lolu cwango lutusa ukuba izilimi zabomdabu zisetshenziswe njengemithombo yezindaba yemfundo ngezinga lokulinganisa. Kubuye kususwe ngokwengeziwe ukuba izimali zitholakalele ukusetshenzisweni kokuqedwa kwezifundo zobukholoni. Okokugcina, isikhungo kumele sithole izindlela ezinobuhlanani zokusungula izinto zokuqinisekisa ukuthi abafundi bayo abaphothule izifundo ezithile banalo ulwazi lokuthuthukiswa kwezinguquko.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CHE	Council on Higher Education
CLS	Critical Legal Studies
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
CRT	Critical Race Theory
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
FET	Further Education and Training
HESA	Higher Education South Africa
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITP	Integrated Transformation Plan
L1	First language
LPHE	Language Policy for Higher Education
MPS	Mont Pelerin Society
NSFAS	National Student Funding Aid Scheme
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NWU	North West University
ODeL	Open Distance e-Learning
PAU	Pan African University
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SU	Stellenbosch University
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFS	University of Free State
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa
UP	University of Pretoria
US	United States

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Abstract	iv
Acronyms.....	viii

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND, PROBLEM FORMULATION AND AIMS

1.1	BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	1
1.1.1	Decolonisation discourse in African universities	1
1.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
1.3	AIM OF THE RESEARCH.....	6
1.4	METHOD	6
1.4.1	Literature study	6
1.4.2	Research design	7
1.4.3	The research site	7
1.4.4	Selection of participants	8
1.4.5	Data collection	10
1.4.5	Phase 1: Document analysis as a data gathering instrument	10
1.4.4.2	Phase 2: Individual telephonic interviews with postgraduate students	11
1.4.4.3	Phase 3: Online qualitative questionnaire as a data gathering instrument.....	12
1.4.5	Data analysis	13
1.4.5.1	Phase 1: Analysis of document data	13
1.4.5.2	Phase 2: Analysis of individual semi- structured telephonic interview data.....	14
1.4.5.3	Phase 3: Analysis of online qualitative questionnaire data	16
1.4.6	Trustworthiness of the data	17
1.4.7	Research ethics	17
1.5	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	18
1.6	CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPTS	18
1.6.1	Decolonisation	18
1.6.2	Critical Race Theory (CRT)	19
1.6.3	Decoloniality.....	19

1.6.4	Decolonisation of curriculum	20
1.6.5	Open Distance eLearning (ODeL)	20
1.6.6	Senior academics	20
1.7	CHAPTER OUTLINE	20
1.8	SUMMARY	21

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED CONCEPTS

2.1	INTRODUCTION	22
2.2	CONCEPTUALISATION OF DECOLONIALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION	23
2.2.1	Decolonisation of higher education	25
2.2.1.1	Working definition of decolonisation	28
2.2.2	Coloniality in higher education	29
2.2.3	Curriculum transformation	32
2.2.4	Africanisation of curriculum	37
2.3	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	39
2.3.1	The Critical Race Theory.....	42
2.3.2	Origins of Critical Race Theory.....	43
2.3.2.1	The centrality of race and racism	44
2.3.2.2	The challenge to dominant ideology	45
2.3.2.3	The interdisciplinary perspective	46
2.3.2.4	The importance of experiential knowledge	47
2.3.2.5	Commitment to social justice.....	48
2.3.4	Brief overview of Derrick Bell's life	50
2.3.4.1	Derrick Bell's interest convergence principle	51
2.3.4.2	The loss and gain binary	52
2.3.4.3	A self and systemic imperative	53
2.4	IMPLICATIONS OF THE CRT IN EDUCATION	55
2.4.1	Ladson-Billings and Tate as academic partners	54
2.4.2	Towards a Critical Race Theory of Education.....	56
2.4.2.1	Race as a significant factor in determining inequality	57
2.4.2.2	United States (US) society is based on property rights rather than on human rights.....	58
2.4.2.2	The intersection of race and property	59

2.5	APPLICATION OF CRT TO THE FIELD OF EDUCATION OUTSIDE AMERICAN CONTEXT	61
2.6	CRITIQUE OF CRT.....	63
2.7	RELEVANCE OF CRT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN THE US, UK AND AUSTRALIA	65
2.8	CRITICAL RACE BASED RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION CONTEXTS	68
2.9	SUMMARY	71

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1	INTRODUCTION	72
3.2	AN OVERVIEW OF DECOLONISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SELECTED COUNTRIES	72
3.2.1	Decolonisation of the curriculum in British and Canadian universities	73
3.2.2	Decolonising Higher Education in New Zealand.....	78
3.2.3	Decolonisation of curriculum in Latin America	80
3.3	DECOLONISING HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOME PARTS OF AFRICA.....	82
3.3.1	Decolonisation in South African higher education contexts	85
3.4	THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION DECOLONISATION TRAJECTORY POST 1994.....	94
3.4.1	Structural policy frameworks highlighting transition from apartheid to democracy in education	95
3.4.1.1	The White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education... ..	95
3.4.1.2	The National Plan for Higher Education	98
3.4.2	Policy documents related to ideological issues in higher education.....	99
3.4.2.1	The Transformation and Social Cohesion and Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education	100
3.4.2.2	The Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008.....	101
3.4.2.3	NQF developments in South Africa's higher education.....	102
3.4.3	Transformation frameworks on pedagogy, epistemology and curriculum in teaching and learning.....	104
3.4.3.1	The Proposal for Undergraduate Curriculum Reform in South Africa	104
3.4.3.2	The White Paper for Post School Education and Training.....	105
3.5	NEOLIBERAL AGENDA IN TRANSFORMING CURRICULUM.....	106

3.6	CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORKS FOR SELECTED SA UNIVERSITIES	108
3.6.1	Curriculum transformation framework of the University of Pretoria (UP).....	109
3.6.2	Curriculum transformation framework of North West University (NWU).....	109
3.6.3	Curriculum transformation framework of the University of Cape Town (UCT)....	110
3.6.4	The Transformation Plan of Stellenbosch University (SU).....	111
3.6.5	Integrated Transformation Plan for the University of Free State (UFS).....	112
3.6.6	The Integrated Transformation Strategy University of South Africa (UNISA)	113
3.6.7	A critique of the selected curriculum transformation policy frameworks	115
3.6.7.1	Epistemological diversity	116
3.6.7.2	Decolonisation of pedagogy	117
3.6.7.3	Decolonising institutional hierarchies	118
3.6.8	Similarities in curriculum transformation documents.....	119
3.7	SUMMARY	119

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1	INTRODUCTION	121
4.2	RESEARCH PARADIGM	122
4.2.1	Ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological orientations	122
4.2.2	Positivism.....	125
4.2.3	Interpretivism	126
4.2.4	Critical paradigm	128
4.2.5	Pragmatic paradigm	128
4.2.6	Paradigm underpinning current study.....	129
4.3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	131
4.3.1	Qualitative research	131
4.3.2	The case study research approach	133
4.3.3	Researcher profile.....	136
4.3.4	The researcher's role	137
4.3.5	The research site	137
4.3.6	Selection of participants	139
4.3.6.1	Selection of senior academics.....	135
4.3.6.2	Selection of the postgraduate students	136
4.3.7	Data collection instruments	141

4.3.7.1	Phase 1: Document analysis as a data gathering instrument	142
4.3.7.2	Phase 2: Individual semi-structured telephonic interview as a data gathering instrument	144
4.3.7.3	Phase 3: Online qualitative questionnaire as a data gathering instrument.....	146
4.3.8	Data analysis	147
4.3.8.1	Phase 1: Analysis of documents	147
4.3.8.2	Phase 2: Analysis of individual semi- structured telephonic interview data.....	149
4.3.8.3	Phase 3: Analysis of online qualitative questionnaire data	151
4.3.9	Trustworthiness of the data	152
4.3.9.1	Audit trail.....	152
4.3.9.2	Study credibility	153
4.9.1.3	Study dependability.....	153
4.9.1.4	Member checking.....	154
4.9.1.5	Study transferability.....	154
4.9.1.6	Triangulation	155
4.4	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	155
4.5	SUMMARY	157

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1	INTRODUCTION	
5.2	FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	
5.2.1	Conceptualisation of transformation at UNISA	161
5.2.2	Operationalising the transformational agenda at UNISA	171
5.2.3	Challenges faced in the implementation of the transformation agenda at UNISA.....	171
5.3	FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS	179
5.3.1	Demographical information of postgraduate students.....	179
5.3.2	Findings from semi-structured individual telephonic interviews with postgraduate students.....	181
5.3.2.1	Conceptualisation of decolonisation of university curriculum.....	182
5.3.2.2	The use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise the curriculum	186
5.4	FINDINGS FROM ONLINE QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE FROM SENIOR ACADEMICS.....	194

5.4.1	Conceptualisation of decolonisation of university curriculum at UNISA	197
5.4.2	The use of IKS as a tool to decolonise the university curriculum	214
5.5	SUMMARY	217

CHAPTER SIX

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1	INTRODUCTION	227
6.2	SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	228
6.2.1	Summary of the literature review	228
6.2.2	Summary of the empirical investigation	232
6.2.2.1	Findings from document analysis	232
6.2.2.2	Findings from the individual semi-structured interviews with the postgraduate students	234
6.2.2.3	Findings from online qualitative questionnaire responses by senior academics	236
6.3	CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH	238
6.3.1	Contribution to participants.....	238
6.3.2	Contribution to theory	239
6.4	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICE.....	241
6.5	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	242
6.6	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	232
6.7	CONCLUSION	243
	Bibliography	235

LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.1 Document features analysed.....	154
Table 5. 2: Demographical information of postgraduate students.....	174
Table 5 3: Emergent themes from interview data	176
Table: 5.4 Demographic information of senior academics who participated in the study ...	194
Table 5.5 Major and sub-themes which emerged from data from senior academics	197

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Proof of registration.....	278
Appendix B: Permission and consent letter to senior academics	279
Appendix C: Permission and consent letter to postgraduate students	280
Appendix D: University permission letter.....	281
Appendix E: Letter of permission from university	283
Appendix F: Interview guide	284
Appendix G: Online questionnaire.....	285
Appendix H: UNISA Integrated Transformatoin Strategy	286
Appendix I: Document analysis	287
Appendix J: Ethical Clearance Certificate	288
Appendix K: UNISA 2030 Strategy.....	289
Appendix L: 2016 Language policy	303
Appendix M: 2018 ODeL policy.....	310
Appendix N: 2016 Student Funding policy	316
Appendix O: Letter of editor	320
Appendix P: Turnitin Report	321

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND, PROBLEM FORMULATION AND AIMS

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Most universities in postcolonial contexts are characterised by Western hegemonies in their operations in areas such as curricula discourses (Du Preez 2018; Gopal 2017; Sibanda 2021; Waghid 2021). The decolonisation agenda is topical in postcolonial university contexts and in higher education institutions globally (Andrews 2019; Bhambra, Gebrial, and Nişancioğlu 2018; Bird and Pitman 2019). The decolonisation agenda is driven by lack of equity, access and success in higher education amongst most indigenous and other marginalised students (Bhambra et al. 2018; Gopal 2017; Mamdani 2018; Mathebula 2019; Manathunga 2020; Morreira, Lockett, Kumalo and Ramgotra 2020). It is further argued that the Western hegemonies in postcolonial contexts are partly a result of those in power who have the privilege to select what to teach and how to teach, thus a curriculum inherently has a political, symbolic value (Du Preez 2018; Jansen 2017). The dominance of Western hegemony within the university curriculum has resulted in student unrest and intellectual debates both locally and globally, which seek to redress the injustices associated with Westernised worldviews in the higher education research, teaching and learning. The internationalisation of higher education has further exacerbated the need to interrogate the Westernised curricula in former coloniser contexts such as the United Kingdom (UK). Towards the end of 2017, for example, the University of Cambridge's undergraduate students called for the decolonisation of their English Literature degree (Bhambra et al. 2018). They further called for a broader curriculum which included non-white male authors and for the English Literature Programme to include literature from the Global South (Morreira et al. 2020).

There are some similarities between the University of Cambridge students' demands and the South African student campaign, the HashTagRhodesMustFall in 2015, which called for the removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, a symbol of white supremacy and institutional racism in South Africa and at Oxford University (Gopal 2017).

The Canadian higher education system reveals that Canadian academic spaces remain largely colonised. The discourse of decolonisation within the Canadian universities reinforces the superiority and maintenance of Western knowledge hegemony. These Western epistemologies result in the devaluation of the Indigenous knowledge systems (Almeida and Kumalo 2018; Louie, Pratt, Hanson and Ottmann 2017; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015; cf. 3.2.1). Thus, it is argued that the modern postcolonial university is an image of Western institutions whose key role is to spread an empire in which the scientific study of culture and identity of the indigenous people remain colonised in the absence of political colonisation (Louie et al. 2017).

Decolonial studies in New Zealand and Australia reveal challenges in the implementation of decolonised curricula programmes (McNabb 2019; Manathunga 2020; Smith 2012). The decolonial literature on New Zealand and Australian higher education institutions affirms the challenges encountered in engaging with academics and students in curricula reforms (Geldud and Sathorar 2016: 1). Thus, currently intellectual debates on decolonisation are characterised by fear, resistance and challenges with the implementation process with the higher education landscape (Amundsen 2019; Gaudry and Lorenzo 2018; Maldonado-Torres 2017; Smith and Smith 2018; cf. 3.2.2; 3.2.3).

The snapshot of discussions on the decolonisation of curricula in UK, Canadian, New Zealand and Australian postcolonial higher education systems show a gap in effective ways to redress the injustices experienced in the curricula, which reflects Global North epistemologies at the expense of the Global South knowledge systems.

1.1.1 Decolonisation discourse in African universities

Within the African contexts, advocates of decolonisation, Heleta (2018), Le Grange (2017; 2018), Mbembe (2017), Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019) and Stein and Andreotti (2017), amongst others, are of the opinion that curriculum research and Western oriented knowledge frameworks used in African education systems need re-

examination and critique (cf. 3.3.1). Such re-examination of knowledge frameworks is imperative in South Africa where the colonial model of academic organisation of the university, based on Western disciplinary knowledge, was entrenched during colonial and apartheid eras and has not been adequately redressed post-apartheid (Hlatshwayo and Alexander 2020; Maine and Wagner 2021; Musitha and Mafukata 2018).

In South Africa, the advent of democracy resulted in education reforms as well as societal reforms. Within the higher education system there was concerted effort to include previously marginalised groups who were mostly the black students (Council for Higher Education 2016; Vorster and Quinn 2017). Another major reform in higher education was to ensure that the demographics of the workforce represent those of the country at large. Furthermore, there was focus on the side of government for the creation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to facilitate the development of programmes of study in line with the knowledge economy (Vorster and Quinn 2017). Since the inception of the formal schooling system introduced by the colonial masters, Western models of education were adopted throughout the schooling system, including higher education institutions. As a result, indigenous knowledge systems of the colonised were mostly excluded and decimated (Le Grange 2016; Heleta 2018; Mbembe 2017). Thus, the decolonisation of the university curricula seeks to centre these knowledges within the higher education systems.

Although student demographics at South African universities, particularly in historically white universities, changed significantly in post-apartheid South Africa, staff demographics at certain universities remain unchanged (Mahabeer 2018; Shawa 2019; Waghid 2019). Where changes in demographics were effected, the culture of these institutions remained unchanged resulting in the assimilation of these marginalised groups into the Western cultures. Where there were changes, the changes have not been followed by curricula changes or any changes in institutional cultures (Hlatshwayo and Alexander 2020: 47). Thus, the required attempts at transforming the higher education institutions appear to be moving at a very slow pace.

In 2015, university students in South Africa universities initiated a populist movement, the HashTagFeesMustFall protests. The protests sparked heightened interest in the discourse of decolonisation of the universities in the country (Almeida and Kumalo 2018). In their protests, students raised concerns about university tuition fees, ongoing outsourcing, the need to decolonise and inequality in access to university education because of the use of dual medium of instruction, that is, English and Afrikaans as media of instruction (Hlatshwayo and Alexander 2020; Mamdani 2018; Mathebula 2019). Thus, the Western model of academic organisation of the South African higher education remained largely unchallenged (Le Grange 2016; Shawa 2019). As asserted by some scholars, the recent student-led movements were dedicated to transforming higher learning institutions in South Africa into more inclusive spaces (Jansen 2017; Manathunga 2020; Waghid 2019). The post-apartheid education system is rooted in the apartheid ideologies which are largely irrelevant to the 21st teaching and learning practices (Mbembe 2016). Despite the collapse of the apartheid system in South Africa in 1994, it is lamentable that the education system has, to some extent, remained unchanged because the style is still characteristic of the Western and apartheid influences (Heleta 2016; Mbembe 2016). Teaching and learning is still done through the medium of Western languages and the content taught reflects Western practices.

Consequently, such scenarios as the HashTagFeesMustFall and HashTagRhodesMustFall campaigns have triggered agitation in the political, social and educational circles (Mamdani 2018). In turn, the academy is compelled to reimagine the purpose of higher education to try and shift from colonising neoliberal regimes to an education system which embraces social justice (Hlatshwayo and Alexander 2020: 45). The call for a decolonised university curriculum may remain rhetoric if pedagogical issues such as the curriculum content and languages of teaching and learning are not addressed in ways which promote Africa as the epicentre of learning in South Africa's education system.

This study explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an Open Distance eLearning (ODeL) institution in South Africa.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Attempts are underway to transform higher education institutions through curricula reforms in several universities in postcolonial contexts around the world including South Africa. Amid such attempts to transform higher education in South Africa, protest actions have taken place in the country's universities where students demanded the decolonisation of university curriculum. They demanded the centring of Africa in universities curricula in order to shift from the hegemonic Western epistemological models which dominate higher education in the country (Heleta 2016; Maine and Wagner 2021; Musitha and Mafukata 2018). The 2015-2016 students protest movements left academics and the academy in a dilemma on how best to transform the university curriculum.

Against this background, the main research question for this study is thus formulated as follows:

What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?

This main research question was broken down into the following sub-questions:

1. How is the concept of the decolonisation of university curricula addressed in literature?
2. What steps have been taken towards curriculum transformation in higher education in South Africa since 1994?
3. What are the perceptions of a sample of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?
4. Based on the findings of the literature review and empirical inquiry, what recommendations can be made for the effective transformation of the university curriculum?

1.3 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

The general aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

In order to attain the above general aim, the following objectives guided the study:

1. To provide a review of literature related to decolonisation of curricula in universities.
2. To discuss the steps taken in curriculum transformation in higher education in South Africa since 1994.
3. To explore the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students at an ODeL institution in South Africa on decolonisation of the university curriculum.
4. To make recommendations, based on the literature and empirical findings, for the effective transformation of the university curriculum.

1.4 METHOD

The research problem was investigated through literature study and empirical inquiry. The empirical inquiry used qualitative approach by means of an interpretive phenomenological intrinsic case study.

1.4.1 Literature study

A literature study of local and overseas academic sources was undertaken. These sources targeted higher education contexts in which curriculum transformation and decolonial discourses are implemented. Furthermore, literature on South African higher education institutions was consulted. A wide range of recently published journal articles, educational legislation, official documents and seminal works on the

decolonial agenda and curriculum transformation were consulted. This review provided a background and context for the empirical study.

1.4.2 Research design

This study explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

The study used the intrinsic case study design which is a qualitative method of inquiry (Adu, 2019; Creswell 2014; cf. 4.3.2). It is closely aligned to the interpretive phenomenological inquiry because the aim is to develop insights from the perspectives of those who are involved in the experience (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). It is an approach about searching for meanings and experiences about a phenomenon, (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). Through the use of hermeneutics, reflectivity helped me to interpret meanings. I preferred using this design to any other because of its main features, namely, rich data and foci on meanings. This design suits the topic of the study because it assisted me in understanding the perceptions of the participants. Although a sample of twenty-eight (28) participants, which is relatively small, cannot be representative of all the senior academics and postgraduate students in South African universities, this type of research results in rich data.

1.4.3 The research site

The research site is one of the oldest and long standing ODeL institutions in South Africa, which is the University of South Africa (UNISA). The main campus of the institution where the current study was conducted is in the Gauteng province (cf. 4.3.5). According to UNISA (2020b:3), the ODeL institution provides higher education to more than 400 000 students from 130 countries around the world through ODeL digital technologies and facilities (UNISA 2020b). Thus, their unique feature is that UNISA uses an ODeL model to facilitate learning amongst its students. In the absence of physical interactions between academics and students, this curriculum delivery mode bridges the time as well of distance between them (cf. 4.3.5). UNISA, like all

universities in the country, experienced the 2015-2016 HashTagFeesMustFall and HashTagRhodesMustFall protest movements. In these protests students protested against Western orientated curricula in South African universities and called for decolonised curricula. As a response to these demands UNISA is embarking on the decolonisation of its curriculum, making it a rich context to conduct this research (cf. 4.3.5).

The selection of the main campus in Pretoria as a research site enabled me to select research participants from different colleges and departments at the institution. The rationale for choosing this institution was also because it enabled me access to both senior academics and postgraduate students virtually which was necessary due to COVID-19 restrictions (cf. 4.3.5).

1.4.4 Selection of participants

Unlike quantitative research sampling methods, which draw upon probability and convenience sampling, qualitative research methods require a more purposeful technique of sampling (McMillan 2016). This is a sampling technique which supports a purposive phenomenological case study approach. In line with the theoretical underpinnings of interpretative phenomenological inquiry, the selection of both senior academics and postgraduate students was done through purposive sampling. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) note that purposive sampling is a qualitative strategy in which information rich cases are selected for in-depth study without desiring to generalise to all such cases (4.3.6).

The sample for this study consisted of sixteen (16) senior academics from different colleges namely Education, Human and Social Sciences, College of Graduate Studies, Economic and Management Sciences, Business and Leadership and Science and Engineering I contacted the gatekeepers namely the Research Permission Sub-committee of the UNISA Senate, Research, Innovation, postgraduate Degrees and Commercialisation Committee (cf. 4.4). The Research Permission Subcommittee nominated three senior academics in the College of Education, who in turn suggested various other senior academics from different colleges.

The sample of this study comprised of sixteen senior academics and the minimum criteria for their inclusion were as follows:

1. Academics who taught postgraduate students prior to the 2015-2016 student protest until the present.
2. Academics who were available and agreed to participate in the study.
3. Full Professors or Associate Professors who are material developers, teachers and assessors of the postgraduate students in the various colleges at the institution.

Such a sample is clearly purposive and constrained by the case site; consent and access to participants at the site (cf. 4.3.6.1). Purposive sampling was further used to select the postgraduate students who participated in this study. The twelve (12) postgraduate students consisted of six masters and six doctoral students. The gatekeepers in the College of Education and the chairpersons of Departments nominated some master's and doctoral students who had the attributes needed for the purpose of this study. The nominated postgraduate students then suggested other postgraduate students for inclusion. The participating postgraduate students were from the following departments: Social Sciences, Science and Technology, African Languages, Language, Arts and Culture, Social Work, Mathematics Education, Law, Science Engineering and Technology.

The minimum inclusion criteria for their selection to participate in this study were as follows:

1. Being a master's or doctoral student registered for the research component of their studies in any of the colleges at the institutions.
2. Voluntary agreement to take part in the study (cf. 4.3.6).

1.4.5 Data collection

This study was situated within the critical race paradigm where the tenets of the tradition advocate methodologies which promote dialogue and social justice (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). In order to meet such methodological imperatives, I used secondary sources such as journal articles, books and seminal works. The literature reviewed and theoretical perspectives discussed broadened my understanding of the problem and informed both my data collection and analysis.

In collecting empirical data, I analysed the following documents: a) the Integrated Transformation Strategy; b) UNISA 2030 Strategy, Vision and Mission Statement; c) 2018 Integrated Annual Report; d) 2019 Integrated Annual Report; e) 2016 Language Policy; f) ODeL Policy and g) Student Funding Policy (cf. 4.3.7.1). I also employed individual semi-structured telephonic, qualitative questionnaires to elicit data from postgraduate students and senior academics respectively (cf. 4.3.7.3: 4.3.7.2). The use of both individual telephonic interviews and online qualitative questionnaires were in order to comply with the COVID-19 regulations (cf. 4.3.7).

The data for this study was gathered in three phases, as described below.

1.4.5.1 Phase 1: Document analysis as a data gathering instrument

In this study, I used document analysis as a data gathering instrument. Information on the decolonisation of university curriculum at UNISA was gleaned from these documents, namely a) the Integrated Transformation Strategy; b) UNISA 2030 Strategy, Vision and Mission Statement; c) 2018 Integrated Annual Report; d) 2019 Integrated Annual Report; e) 2016 Language Policy; f) ODeL Policy; and g) Student Funding Policy (cf. 4.3.7.1). My study focused on perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. The study adopts an interpretative/ interpretive paradigm in which knowledge or meaning is considered as historically and culturally orientated (Wood, Sebar and Vecchio 2020). As a result, documents have the potential to shed light on the historical and cultural context of the university in which the participants in

this study operate. Document analysis is a qualitative method of data collection which entails the systematic review and evaluation of content in the written documents (Bowen 2009). The logic behind such a systematic review and evaluation is to facilitate the examination and interpretation of data so as to elicit meaning and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen 2009).

The documents analysed provided a deeper understanding of the discourses of decolonisation of UNISA's curriculum. I opted for document analysis because documents contain content which provides information on the decolonisation of the university curriculum in this study, document analysis was used as a complementary data collection method whereas, individual semi-structured telephonic interviews and an online qualitative questionnaire were the primary data gathering methods in this study. Complementary data collection methods are plausible as they enhance triangulation of data (Gitomer and Crouse 2019; Garces, Marin and Horn 2017; cf. 4.3.7.1).

1.4.5.2 Phase 2: Individual telephonic interviews with postgraduate students

The second phase of data collection entailed using individual telephonic interviews with the twelve postgraduate students. Only one interview was conducted with each of the twelve participating postgraduate students. A total of twelve individual interviews were held. Each interview was thirty minutes long (cf. 4.3.7.2). As observed by Gray (2014), if conducted well, the interview can be a powerful instrument to use to elicit rich data on people's views, attitudes and the meanings which corroborate their lives and behaviours. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) indicate that there are three forms of interviews which are:

1. *The informal conversational interview* in which the questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in the natural course of events since there is no predetermination of question topics or phrasing.
2. *The interview guide approach* whereby topics are selected in advance but the researcher decides the sequence and wording of the questions during the interview.

3. *The standardised open-ended interview* in which participants are asked the same questions in the same order, thus reducing interview flexibility and naturalness and relevancy of the response.

I chose the interview guide approach because of its advantage of promoting flexibility in terms of the order in which the topics are considered. Furthermore, this form of interview allowed me to change the wording of a question whenever I realised that the participant had not fully understood it. In this kind of inquiry, analysis and interpretation of the findings take place simultaneously, that is, during and not only after data collection (Mc Millan and Schumacher 2014). All interview sessions were recorded on a digital recorder with permission of the research participants. Furthermore, I made field notes during the interview processes for cross referencing during data analysis (cf. 4.3.7.2).

1.4.4.3 Phase 3: Online qualitative questionnaire as a data gathering instrument

I used the online qualitative questionnaire as an instrument to collect data from the sixteen senior academics who participated in this study (cf.4.3.7.3). Qualitative questionnaires ask open-ended questions which are meant to elicit the participants' comments, opinions, perceptions, experiences and suggestions about a phenomenon being studied (Eckerdal and Hagstromm 2017; Wachelke 2014). The qualitative questionnaire was distributed to the sixteen senior academics using emails (cf. 4.3.7.3). I received feedback from ten senior academic participants within the first month after distribution whereas the remaining six were received a month later. I chose the online qualitative questionnaire which aligned to the institution's COVID-19 guidelines (UNISA 2020). All senior academics confirmed that their schedules were hectic, hence they preferred online qualitative questionnaire to telephonic interviews. The online qualitative questionnaire was preferred in order to comply with COVID-19 regulations and to accommodate participating senior academics to respond to the questionnaire at their convenient times.

1.4.5 Data analysis

This section details how I analysed data gathered from documents, individual semi-structured telephonic interviews and online qualitative questionnaire, respectively.

1.4.5.1 Phase 1: Analysis of document data

I used qualitative thematic document analysis as one of the three data gathering methods in this research study. In order to understand the holistic perceptions of the senior academics, postgraduate students and the context in which the perceptions are produced, I analysed critical documents dealing with the decolonisation and transformation of curriculum at the ODeL institution: Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy, Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 Integrated Annual Report; 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy; ODeL Policy; and 2016 Student Funding Policy. These documents provided me with contextual information on the institution's decolonisation and transformation agenda. I used Merriam's (1998) criteria to determine which documents to select for analysis for this study. Merriam (2009) explains that for a document to be included and analysed, it should have insights relevant to the research questions and these should be easily accessible.

After reviewing each document a few times, I recorded notes on the elements which seemed most appropriate to the research questions to address the following:

1. Authorship and intended audience
1. The function of the document
2. Content and meaning
3. Intertextuality and authority
4. Language and form of the document.

I coded the recorded notes according to the themes which emerged (Corbin and Strauss 2008). The period of intense review and coding was followed by the creation of categories of themes. This was followed by re-reading of categories of themes until

a hierarchy of themes emerged. I used selective coding to determine which details from the data are most relevant to my study. Subsequently, I used the most relevant details from data to inform my interpretation and discussion of the data (4.3.8.1). I then triangulated the data from the document analysis, online qualitative questionnaire and individual semi-structured telephonic interviews to increase credibility of the findings (Corbin and Strauss 2008; Creswell 2014).

1.4.5.2 Phase 2: Analysis of individual semi- structured telephonic interview data

To analyse the data which I gathered from the individual semi-structured telephonic interviews, I used the four-part analytical process of Smith, Flower and Larkin (2009). The first step of the process involved the transcription of the data gathered from the twelve postgraduate students. Gray (2014) emphasises that transcription is a vital part of the research process. I transcribed the individual semi-structured telephonic interview data verbatim by typing them. In line with Creswell (2014), I transcribed the raw data while examining my field notes for a deeper meaning of the transcribed data (4.3.8.2). The following steps were followed during data analysis:

During the initial step, I immersed myself in the transcriptions of the participants' individual semi-structured telephonic interview data. During the reading and re-reading stage, I only considered one participant's transcript at a time before moving on to the next participant to enable myself to enter the participant's world and interpret his or her experiences. As I did that, I made sure that I listened to audio recordings to allow the participants' tones, emotions, and nuances to be connected to the transcription. By using the audio recording while reading through transcripts, I was able to understand and accurately interpret the participants' data. Smith and Osborn (2007: 527) argue that qualitative data analysis "is a personal process and the analysis itself is the interpretive work the investigator does at each of the stages". At this level, I used analytic memos which included initial perceptions, thoughts, reflections, and identification, notes, comments or any other surprising matters which occurred during the data analysis (Cohen et al. 2011). Memoing helped me in the process of reflectivity.

The second step was initial coding during which I analysed lines of the transcriptions. Because coding is not merely a technical task as indicated by Gray (2014), as I coded the data, new meanings and understandings emerged, making it necessary to adjust my original plan. The coding of data started immediately after the commencement of interviews with postgraduate students (Corbin and Strauss 2008). The segments or codes of data were based on the broad research question below:

1. What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?

After that, I specified codes for the data that appear meaningful. I distinguished the codes in categories identified by Smith et al. (2009) as follows:

1. *Descriptive*, where the researcher identifies of key topics and phrases and explanations of the interview subject.
2. *Linguistic* in which the researcher attempts to put meaning behind words and participants' use of language.
3. *Conceptual* where the researcher identifies preliminary concepts and themes that begin to describe participants' experience with the phenomenon. In doing all this, the aim was to find participants' expressions that can be identified as theoretical connections within and across cases (Smith and Osborn 2007).

In the third step of the process I developed emergent themes derived from data interpretation and looked for connections among possible themes of my interpretations of data from all 28 participants. As themes began to emerge, I emphasised the data that I had coded rather than the verbatim transcription of participants' interviews. Smith et al. (2009) point out that those themes are forms of iterative analysis and involve a close interaction between the reader and the text.

In the last step of my data analysis, I searched for connections across emergent themes. During this phase, I used the coded data to generate my overall analysis. I

inspected the coded data to find out patterns or connections evident among the data. After that I recorded and entered all the themes from the coded data and started to formulate them into logical groupings. Each grouping received a particular name with indications of my interpretation of the overall theme. Field notes that I made during the reading of the questionnaire responses and the interviews were analysed in the same way as the audio recording transcriptions. Thus, in short, I read and re-read all data transcripts from audio records and field notes, as well as relevant documents and literature in relation to the decolonisation of university curriculum in South Africa. My aim was to use critical race theory (CRT) to understand the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

1.4.5.3 Phase 3: Analysis of online qualitative questionnaire data

I used thematic analysis to analyse the online qualitative questionnaire data which I gathered from the sixteen senior academics who participated in this study. I analysed the data manually on Microsoft Word. My analysis included the six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The phases are: gaining familiarity with the data in the questionnaire, generation of initial codes, search for themes from the coded data, reviewing themes, defining and naming of themes and finally presenting and discussing the findings (4.3.8.3).

In order to familiarise myself with the data, I read and re-read the questionnaire responses to get the exact meaning as intended by the participant (Baun and Clarke 2006; Check and Schutt 2012). In instances where further clarification was needed for me to grasp exact meanings, I followed up on the respective participants through myLife email for elaboration. After familiarisation with the data, I noted meaningful data, recurring ideas and codes in form of phrases which represented significant data (cf. 4. 4).

1.4.6 Trustworthiness of the data

According to Mc Millan and Schumacher (2014), trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to “the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher”. In other words, the researcher and the participants should agree on the descriptions or compositions of events especially on the meanings of those events (Creswell 2014). In this study, trustworthiness was considered through the use of multi-method strategies such as: audit trail, study credibility, study dependability, member checking and study transferability (cf. 4.3.9). These strategies are numerous paths that can lead to effective validation of the research findings (Patton 2015). The different research methods used namely; document analysis, individual interviews with postgraduate students and qualitative questionnaire with senior academics provided for the triangulation of data. This in turn facilitated corroboration in the understanding of the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curricula at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Lastly, I communicated findings through thick rich descriptions based on the data which were recorded by audio recorder, responses on online qualitative questionnaires and detailed verbatim field notes.

1.4.7 Research ethics

Mc Millan and Schumacher (2014:129) reiterate that most educational research deals with people making it essential for researchers to understand their ethical responsibilities and considerations to be upheld while conducting empirical investigations. Prior to the commencement of the empirical investigation, ethical clearance was sought and obtained from the College of Education where I am registered (Appendix J). Since the study involved senior academics and postgraduate students from the institution I applied for a university permission letter which I was also granted (Appendix D). With the two authorisation documents, I was able to contact the sixteen academics and twelve postgraduate students to request their participation in the study. They consented in writing to participate in the study (Appendices B and C).

The research participants' identities were protected through the use of letters of the alphabet. They were further alerted to their rights to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty (cf. 4.4). Research participants were treated with respect and their safety was ensured. All ethical measures were observed. I provided each participant with the information concerning the aim and nature of the study (cf. 4.4).

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Creswell (2014), states that it is important to examine the limitations of a study, which identifies its potential weaknesses. Because every study is prone to particular limitations which can compromise its credibility and dependability, caution was taken in my research to reduce such potentialities.

The study only represented the voices of sixteen senior academics and twelve postgraduate students at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Because of the small sample size and uniqueness of the university at which the study took place, the results may not be generalised to other senior academics and postgraduate students at other South African universities. It is my contention that, while it may be inapplicable to make broad generalisations, the reality of interests resided in the participants. I told their stories through their voices, perspectives, lived experiences and understanding. Above all, I presented data and what the participants' lived experiences reveal in relation to the research questions (cf. 4.5).

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms were used frequently throughout the study and they are clarified so that the reader can understand them in the same way I do.

1.6.1 Decolonisation

Stein and Andreotti (2017) understand decolonisation as an effort to break away from the Western epistemological dominance. Similarly, I concur with Wa Thiongo (1994) in understanding decolonisation as serving the purpose to deconstruct prevailing

Westernised Eurocentric practices in the acknowledgement and production of intellectual indigenous knowledge systems that have been ignored and obscured by colonialism.

In this study, decolonisation is understood as the efforts which are put in place by the stakeholders to centre indigenous knowledges in transforming teaching, learning and scholarship engagements, thus provincialising Western worldviews. In other words, where transformation entails centring knowledge systems of the formerly colonised to elevate their culture and identity, I refer to that as decolonisation.

1.6.2 Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Tate (1997) explains CRT as a school of thought associated with critiquing racial narratives and interjected voice scholarship as a means to build theory and inform practice in the law. At the core of the above definitions is intent to dismantle legal systemic violence in the American legal discourse in order to create platforms for social justice. Although the definitions above are confined to the United States (US) contexts, the theory has been used in educational context in other countries which seek to address systematic, institutional and epistemological injustices.

1.6.3 Decoloniality

In this thesis, decoloniality is understood as the interrogation of the geographical location of knowledge production and ontological politics of being. Such an interrogation influences epistemic disobedience, resulting in alternative ways of producing knowledge outside the Western frameworks (Hlatshwayo 2018; Lobo 2020). The term is also conceptualised as involving the recognition that the subalterns do not belong to the sphere located to them by those who discursively invented them as 'others'.

1.6.4 Decolonisation of curriculum

From an African perspective, when a curriculum is decolonised, that means those who design and implement it transform it by placing African culture, literature and language at the heart of educational projects so that African students can learn about themselves first before they learn about people and contexts outside their settings (Wa Thiongo 1994). I also understand decolonisation of curriculum as the provincialising of Westernised canons of knowledge and embracing formerly marginalised philosophies as equally valid knowledges. I further use decolonisation of curriculum interchangeably with transformation of curriculum wherein the transformation aims to validate indigenous epistemologies.

1.6.5 Open Distance eLearning (ODeL)

Manyike (2017) refers to an ODeL institution as a multi-dimensional concept whose aspiration is to bridge the gap between students and the institution, students and the academics, and students and their peers. In other words ODeL can also mean the online learning which takes place in the absence of face to face interactions students and academics or between students themselves through digital and/ or electronic technologies which bridge the time and place gaps.

1.6.6 Senior academics

In this study, senior academics refer to Associate and Full Professors who participated in this study.

1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The chapters in this study are outlined below.

Chapter 1 discussed the background, problem formulation and aim and objectives of the study. It also described the research design, ethical issues trustworthiness and limitations of the study. Key terms were clarified.

Chapter 2 discussed the conceptual framework and CRT which underpins the study.

Chapter 3 reviewed related literature on decolonisation of university curriculum which served to give a broader context of the study.

Chapter 4 elaborated on the research design of the study.

Chapter five presented and discussed the data from document analysis, postgraduate students and senior academics who participated in the study.

Chapter 6 provided a summary of findings from the study, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings from the literature review and empirical investigations and final conclusions were drawn

1.8 SUMMARY

This chapter examined the background of the study, statement of the problem, aim and objectives of the study. The background established that the discourse of decolonisation is perceived by academics and students from different perspectives. As a result the decolonisation of the university curriculum is approached from different angles, making it impossible for a departure from a common understanding. The chapter also provided an outline of the research design, trustworthiness and ethical issues, limitations and definition of key terms. The next chapter discusses the conceptual and theoretical frameworks which undergird this study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED CONCEPTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Chapter one of the study provided background to the study, problem statement, aim and objectives of the study. It also outlined the research design, trustworthiness and ethical issues, limitations of the study and clarification of terms. This chapter discusses the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underpin this study.

The conceptual framework is understood by Leshem and Trafford (2007) and Smyth (2004) as a set of broad ideas and principles from relevant fields of study which are used to structure a subsequent presentation. According to Leshem and Trafford (2007), a conceptual framework directs a researcher to select salient features and come up with a rational explication of the relationships of the important variables of the study. Building on that, I focused on relevant sources in providing the necessary background in my conceptualisation of decolonisation of the university curriculum. Key sources in this conceptualisation of the decolonial theory and discussion of curriculum transformation are Fanon, (1952; 1963; 2004), Maldonado- Torres (2007; 2017), Mignolo (2000; 2009; 2011; 2015) and Wa Thiongo (1994). Several other scholarly works on decolonisation, such as Grosfoguel (2007), Jansen (2017; 2019), Le Grange (2017; 2018) and Hlatshwayo (2018) also helped me to shape my conceptualisation.

Debates on the decolonisation of higher education in South Africa have resulted in a body of research conducted in an effort to decolonise policies and practices in higher education institutions. However, researchers seem to differ considerably on whether the decolonial project is feasible in South Africa (Voster and Quinn 2017; Jansen 2019; Mathebula 2019; Nyoni 2019; Quinn 2019; Waghid 2019). Thus, there is a need for further research to move the debate forward. That being noted, in the following section I discuss decoloniality in higher education, paying particular attention to concepts such

as decolonisation of higher education, coloniality in higher education, curriculum transformation and Africanisation of curriculum. The discussions on these concepts help in developing a conceptual framework which explicates and shows the intersectionality among those variable or concepts.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF DECOLONIALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The concept of decoloniality originated at an Asian-African conference held in April 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia. At that conference, twenty-nine government representatives from various third world countries met to discuss the role of the third world in the cold war, economic development and decolonisation (Mignolo 2011). Delegates from Africa and Asia gathered to find some common vision for the future; the vision emerged as decolonisation. In 1961, a non-aligned conference followed in which Latin-American countries joined forces with African and Asian countries (Mignolo 2009). Since then, decoloniality has been viewed as a way of dealing with the Global North's hegemonic tendencies in public domains of life as well as higher education institutions.

Scholars such as Grosfoguel (2007), Maldonado- Torres (2007; 2017) and Mignolo (2009; 2015), view decoloniality as a new way of thinking which seeks to delink the chronologies of Western knowledge systems, which have existed as the only models to orient human thinking and behaviour. Mignolo (2000) advances that a subaltern whose goal is to decolonise will have to delink, but in order to succeed in doing that, one should be prepared to be epistemically disobedient, or exercise border line thinking. Border line thinking entails questioning the geopolitics of knowledge, local histories and personal identities (Maldonado-Torres 2017; Mignolo and Walsh 2018; Zavala 2016). Explicitly, it means the geographical location of knowledge production and ontological politics of being influence the disobedience, resulting in alternative ways of producing knowledge outside the Western frameworks (Hlatshwayo 2018; Lobo 2020). It also involves the recognition that the subalterns do not belong to the sphere or location which has been located to them by those who discursively invented them as others (Fanon 1963). The contemporary experiences of Latin-American scholars such as Maldonado- Torres (2007; 2017), Mignolo (2009; 2015) and South

African scholars such as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) and Mamdani (2018), just to mention a few, have been linked by Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2018) to the contributions of CRT research in as far as their input illuminates the dire need to end epistemic apartheid.

Building upon foundations cemented by scholars such as Grosfoguel (2007), Maldonado-Torres (2007), Mignolo (2009; 2015) and Spivak (1988), I agree that by delinking themselves from othered positions, subalterns reject definition as 'others', or as inferior people. Thus, decoloniality is a method used to explore and interrogate the geopolitics of knowledge and identity issues. When one interrogates dominant epistemies, one begins to understand how capitalism, colonisation, modernity and neoliberalism have displaced modes of living, thinking and being (Fataar 2018; Koopman 2019; Ndlovu- Gatsheni 2015; 2017). In other words, I concur with Chilisa's (2012: 17) position that decoloniality is a paradigm of restoration and repatriation since at its core is the aspiration to restore, rediscover and validate experiences and identities of people who have been marginalised on the basis of who they are. Thus, the subaltern confronts and interrogates the global designs about them. Mignolo (2009) attests that rejecting stereotypes such as being othered is a decolonial turn in progress. To sum up, the term decoloniality can be understood as an approach to consider histories, identities, beliefs and social practices as part of a spectrum of ways of knowledge production. I understand decoloniality as a means to make meaningful connections between knowledge production and experiences as inseparable.

However, Jansen (2017; 2019), Mignolo (2009), Mathebane (2019) and Williams (2018) argue that decolonising curricula of university institutions appears to be a challenge because the administrative executives of these institutions may not be ready to embrace it. Such a challenge to decolonising higher education institutions is not only uniquely South African but also a challenge in the rest of Africa and the independent world. Hence, Simukungwe (2019) observes that institutions of higher learning knowledge systems are grounded in Eurocentricism; as a result there appears to be lack of commitment to appreciate and implement decoloniality in their practices. I advance that such a scenario is the backdrop against which this study is situated.

Efforts are however noticeable through academic seminars, courses and workshops in which issues around the problematic concept of decolonisation of university curricula are discussed by academics and students in the South African context (Mheta et al. 2018; Williams 2018). Keet, Sattarzadeh and Munene (2017) and Jansen (2017; 2019) assert that although decolonial thought is welcome in most African based postcolonial studies, caution should be taken. In other words, I situate my study in a context where some scholarly literature asserts that decoloniality will struggle to become praxis, hence the likelihood of it remaining some kind of rhetoric (Keet et al. 2017). The major reason behind decolonial rhetoric is that the social structures of the academy have been working on disallowing it to become a productive project (Jansen 2019; Koopman 2019; Mignolo 2009). Almeida and Kumalo (2018) further affirm that policies and practices in South African academic spaces remain largely unchanged although evidence of decolonisation is under way. It is against such a background that I problematise decolonisation of university curricula attempts in South African higher education institutions. There is contestation in scholarship, which is characterised by graphical attestations showing how controversial the decolonial project is in the country's higher education spaces.

In my conceptualisation of decoloniality in this study, I am indebted to caution expressed by Le Grange (2018); Manthalu and Waghid (2019) and Sepota (2019) that decoloniality in education should be rooted in the ideal of democratic views towards knowledge reconstruction and otherness which should not be limited to a particular hegemonic tradition. I concur that decoloniality should be guarded from becoming an uncritical elevation of everything indigenous.

The conceptualisation of decolonisation in higher education follows in the next section.

2.2.1 Decolonisation of higher education

The term decolonisation has become a buzzword in higher education around the world and especially in South African universities since the 2015-2016 HashTagFeesMustFall and HashTagRhodesMustFall students' protests (Padayachee, Matimolane and Ganas 2018).

Scholars such as Stein and Andreotti (2017: 370) assert that decolonisation can be comprehended as:

“...an umbrella term for diverse efforts to resist the distinct, intertwined process of colonisation and racialisation, to enact transformation and redress in reference to the historical and ongoing effects of these processes, and to create and keep alive modes of knowing, being and relating that these processes seek to eradicate.”

I realise that Stein and Andreotti’s (2017) definition alludes to the considerations of the needs of those who were colonised and those who share the colonial experiences so that they are accorded means to emancipate themselves from the yokes of foreign knowledge systems. On the other hand, Wa Thiongo (1994: 48) defines decolonisation as the move away from current Eurocentric norms towards the centring of African perspectives. There is need to place African culture, literature and language at the heart of educational projects so that African students can learn about themselves first before they learn about people and contexts outside their settings (Mbembe 2015). In their definition of decolonisation, Mheta et al. (2018) borrow from Wa Thiongo’s theorisation of the concept. They subscribe to Wa Thiongo (1994: 49) that:

“With Africa at the centre of things, not existing as an appendix or a satellite of other countries and literatures, things must be seen from the African perspective. All other things are to be considered in their relevance to our situation and their contribution towards understanding ourselves. In suggesting that we are not rejecting other streams.”

One can see that that the perspective in the above quote explicitly reveals his stance on two salient things that sustainable decolonisation entails. Firstly, it centres African knowledge systems as a point of departure. Secondly there is an emphasis that other knowledge systems stemming from outside Africa will not be rejected but will be appended to the core-African ways of knowing as long as they are relevant to African situations.

For Wa Thiongo (1994), the logic behind decolonisation is for a call upon Africans to help them to see themselves not as totally separate beings, but to see themselves in relation to others. Regarding pedagogical issues, Wa Thiongo views decolonisation as a process of struggle about what content should be taught and under what circumstances should it be taught (Jansen 2017; Wa Thiongo 1994). Wa Thiongo's insightful clarification of the decolonisation process highlights the inclusive element in how decolonisation should be conceptualised for the common good. I therefore support the stance of Chilisa (2012), Jansen (2019) and Le Grange (2016; 2019) that decolonisation should guard against the genocide of other streams of knowledge systems.

The term decolonisation is both dynamic and contradictory because of its multiple meanings (Cherrington, Botha and Keet 2018; Koopman and Koopman 2018; Mheta et al. 2018; Sathorar and Geduld 2018). For the cited researchers, decolonisation should mean the inclusion of local content when selecting the teaching and learning material. This is echoed by Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) who explicate that the decolonisation of university curriculum is the foregrounding of local knowledge systems and experiences in the curriculum. The inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems in the curriculum will eradicate the view that Global North knowledges are the only knowledge systems (Cherrington et al. 2018; Fomunyam 2017; Mathebane and Sekudu 2018).

Apart from the scholars cited above who embrace inclusive approaches in the decolonisation project, other researchers concur that effective decolonisation should embrace western, eastern and northern knowledges (Jansen 2017; Manathunga 2019; Mbembe 2015). In decolonising the curriculum and centring Africa within South African higher education institutions, issues of language of instruction come to the fore. Given the multicultural and multilingual nature of the country, the question of using indigenous languages for teaching and learning in higher education institutions as part of the decolonial project becomes important. Although the country entered its democratic dispensation in 1994 and the new democratic government committed to respecting national language diversity by recognising nine indigenous languages, implementation of these languages as media of instruction has not materialised. It took

the 2015-2016 student protests to make universities realise the need to implement language policies which accommodate indigenous languages for teaching and learning in higher education. In these protests students decided that the dual media language policies followed by certain universities were discriminatory; hence all South African higher education institutions should use English as primary medium of instruction until such a time that indigenous languages would be introduced as academic languages (Shava and Manyike 2018; Manyike 2017). Thus, the talk of decolonising the curriculum in higher education was initiated not by the academics in higher education institutions but by students. South African academics only reacted after the students had raised their concern of lack of transformation in institutions of higher learning. I therefore argue that, as averred by Fanon (1963), Jansen (2019), Padayachee et al. (2018), Wa Thiongo (1994) and Zembylas (2018), decolonisation is a complex phenomenon to understand because it is characterised by contradictions and paradoxes.

2.2.1.1 Working definition of decolonisation

The concept of decolonisation is a complex term which is characterised by dynamic interpretations. For the purpose of this study, I understand decolonisation as a process of undoing the colonial elements which are evident in coloniality of being, knowledge and knowledge production. The process also entails the creation of spaces which promote the recognition and generation of the knowledges of the indigenous people as equally valid. In framing decolonisation of higher education, I therefore regard it as a critical process of engagement in breaking the dominant colonial worldviews which are detached from the realities of indigenous thought. The placement of indigenous thought at the core of the educational process may be understood through Africanisation, which is discussed in detail in section 2.2.4 below. When opportunities are created for the promotion of recognition of knowledges other than that which is Western as equally relevant knowledges, then decolonisation is also understood as the transformation of knowledge creation, and how that knowledge should be delivered by accommodating marginalised knowledge systems.

The concept of coloniality in education is discussed in the following subsection.

2.2.2 Coloniality in higher education

Other scholars understand decolonisation as the deconstruction and deassembling of coloniality, another key factor in my research which needs clear conceptualisation also regarding its relationship to decolonisation (Chilisa 2012). Thus, it is imperative to examine coloniality and answer the question: what is coloniality? Maldonado- Torres (2007) understands coloniality as some kind of structure which defines an organisation and the dissemination of epistemic resources. The process of dissemination promotes epistemic violence, among other injustices (Maldonado-Torres 2007; Mathebane and Sekudu 2018). Thus the impact of colonisation goes beyond the physical act of territorial demarcation to include internal processes of valorising the coloniser's culture. In other words, various kinds of injustices experienced in South Africa during apartheid led to the loss of the indigenous people's self-determination to live as indigenous people (Mignolo and Walsh 2018; Schutte 2019). Therefore, although South Africa, like other formerly colonised nations, has gained political independence, coloniality still exists in indigenous people's minds.

During colonialism, the colonialists designed policies which impacted on the indigenous people by means of colonising their minds. The colonialists designed policies in different domains of life which dictated how indigenous people should live (Nyoni 2019). In ensuring that the colonised people behaved according to the colonial masters' cultural norms and values, there were economic gains to be accrued through such changes. Decolonisation of the mind entailed rejecting one's indigenous identity and embracing that of the coloniser. Thus, without self-identity the subaltern had no alternative but to assimilate into cultures of colonialists (Fanon 1952; Wa Thiongo 1994). One such policy in South Africa was the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The Act promulgated inferior education for black South Africans and dual media of instruction policy where black students were taught using English and Afrikaans on a 50:50 basis (Chaka et al. 2017; Mathebula 2019; Lockett 2018; Mheta et al. 2018).

I concur with Almeida's and Kumalo's (2018:5) affirmation that by enacting the Bantu Education legislation, the apartheid government entrenched modes of coloniality through erasing indigenous knowledge systems as a legitimate power of knowing in

the academy. The legislation relegated indigenous South Africans to perpetual servitude to whiteness as the indigenous people were not only taught in separate schools from those of whites, but also had to receive education through the medium of Afrikaans, not indigenous languages (Heleta 2018; Hlatshwayo and Shawa 2018; Mathebane 2019; Mbembe 2015). The perpetual servitude to whiteness in the South African university has been condemned by Mbembe (2015: 6), who argues that apart from decommissioning statues which represent Western knowledge systems, new forms of knowledge and methods of teaching should be adopted in African higher education.

Thus, Mbembe's (2015) argument implies the need for a curriculum which moves beyond outdated knowledge systems and teaching methods. Instead of using old pedagogical practices, Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2018) and Le Grange (2018) insist on the creation of newness in teaching by including scholars and indigenous knowledges from the Global South into the curriculum. It is also averred that the use of Western theories and teaching through the medium of languages such as English and Afrikaans are examples of coloniality beyond political colonisation (Heleta 2018; Mbembe 2016; Mudimbe 2017; Wa Thiongo 1994). Thus, the colonial ways of thinking and knowing hegemonised Eurocentricism (Mathebane and Sekudu 2018:2). The colonial project of caging the African mind is present in today's African universities (Ammon 2019; Chaka et al. 2017; Khoza and Biyela 2019; Mahabeer 2018; Ndlovu- Gutsheni 2019; Nyoni 2019; Shawa 2019). Universities in Africa as well as other third world countries were fashioned to cater for the Eurocentric needs. Although concerted efforts were made after independence, the curricula of these universities remain largely Eurocentric. Although these universities enjoy some academic freedom, their curricula still promote Western thought which influences curricula design and pedagogical practices (Albertus and Kar-Tong 2019; Gumede and Mtshengu 2018; Masipa 2018; Nyoni 2019). The Eurocentric ways of viewing the world permeated the educational issues such as curricula and pedagogical practices in South Africa. Thus Europe is located at the centre stage of the democratic South African's education system (Maldonado-Torres 2007; Mignolo 2009; 2015; Nyoni 2019). Maldonado-Torres (2007) explicates coloniality as the long-standing power patterns which originate from colonialism yet continue to be practised in the absence of colonial administration.

Against this background, it becomes more meaningful to explicate deconstruction as the reversal of the mentality of denying one's true being, culture and languages. For the reversal to be effective, I concur with Chilisa (2012) and Laenui (2009) that the deconstruction process should include the following stages:

1. For decolonisation to be effective, the colonised have to re-understand their history and own their culture, language and identity with love and integrity;
2. The colonised need to mourn and lament the continuous assault of their cultures and identities even after political independence;
3. The lamenting process will result in healing;
4. The colonised people will finally start to dream and they will thus have a vision on how to correct the past injustices;
5. The process of dreaming and imaging invites commitment and determination to carry out action to correct what has been done wrong.

Scholars such as Chilisa (2012), Le Grange (2018), Nyoni (2019) and Sathorar and Geduld (2018) purport that the deconstruction process entails some calculated, intelligent resistance to the forces of colonialism which fostered the exploitation of the human mind and being. The ability to reverse the mentality of denying one's identity and culture eventually leads to the overturn of the colonial mental structures (Maldonado-Torres 2017; Mignolo 2009; Tuck and Yang 2018). When the mental colonial structures are uprooted, the formerly colonised then become the indigenous liberated. In university settings, it is imperative for all stakeholders to cultivate conscientisation which helps in learning how to critique one's own mind in relation to what one thinks about one's identity and the epistemologies of former colonisers (Hlatshwayo 2018).

There is intersectionality between the decolonisation agenda and coloniality. I argue that it is only possible to decolonise something if that thing is characterised by coloniality, otherwise there will be nothing to decolonise (Dhunpath and Subbay 2018; Sayed et al. 2017). I advance that the caging of colonial thinking that Western languages and epistemologies are the best fit for teaching and learning in postcolonial African universities requires deconstruction (Mogaji, Maringe and Hinson 2020). I

emphasise that the 2015-2016 populist HashTagFeesMustFall and HashTagRhodesMustFall student protests are an indication that students demanded the disentangling of colonial thinking as represented by the Eurocentric content and metaphors of coloniality. This could be a step in the right direction despite critiques that it only represented decolonisation of the physical structures (Hlatshwayo and Shawa 2018; Mbembe 2015).

2.2.3 Curriculum transformation

In this study, I chose epistemically to locate the curriculum debates within higher education curriculum transformation and I conceptualise the calls for decolonisation of curriculum as a complicated phenomenon.

In order to understand the discourse of decolonisation of university curriculum, it is imperative to unpack the term curriculum. Bernstein (1975) defines curriculum as what counts as valid knowledge. Such a definition is significant to the current study which explored perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. The significance stands out in as far as it leads to the question of whose knowledge counts as valid in the curriculum and whose knowledge is excluded from it. If Bernstein's (1975) definition of curriculum is to be considered, it follows that in all facets of curriculum, stakeholders should always ask whether the curriculum is valid to the consumers.

Pinar (2010) understands curriculum as a complicated conversation between teachers and students and among students themselves, structured by guidelines focused by objectives and determined by outcomes. Further elaboration about the complexity of the conversation is that teachers and students are individuals who bring their own knowledge, interests and disinterests to the learning and teaching situation (Pinar 2010). I understand the complex nature of curriculum conversation in as far as it compels both teacher and student to engage in internal dialogues. The dialogues seek to ask and answer whose knowledge is being taught and why. I argue that such

internal conversations can be paralleled to Mignolo's (2009) borderline thinking discourse (cf. 2.2).

Other scholars identify categories of curriculum as hidden, null and explicit (Le Grange 2016: 7). The explicit curriculum is what students are provided with by the university such as module frameworks, prescribed books and material plus assessment guidelines. The hidden curriculum is what students learn about dominant cultures of universities and the values it reproduces (Mamdani 2018). The null curriculum is what universities leave out, what is not taught and what is not learnt (Aoki 1999; Le Grange 2016; Mamdani 2018). I advance that it is largely because the current explicit curriculum is Eurocentric; that is why the students protested against it. I further argue that the rejection of the current curriculum by students is a demand for inclusion of the null curriculum (African based epistemologies) and the removal of hidden structural imbalances.

Koopman (2019) explicates that curriculum is derived from the Latin word *currere*, which means a course or path. The use of curriculum then became associated with orthodox Protestant bourgeois culture or capitalist ideology. That capitalist idea about the curriculum was adopted by the Universities of Glasgow in Scotland and Leiden in the Netherlands at the beginning of the 17th century (Koopman 2019). With passage of time, the concept of curriculum evolved to entail philosophical perspectives which provided means through which knowledge should be systematically organised and delivered to the consumers (Koopman 2019; Pinar 2010). As the evolution of curriculum continued, 20th century scholars such as (Bobbitt 1918; Tyler 1949) spread throughout the world, including Africa and South Africa (Koopman 2019). Post-apartheid curricula for basic and higher education are framed on the 20th century Tylerian model (Koopman 2019; Le Grange 2016). The curricula based on the factory model have been heavily criticised. It is argued by Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott and Trow (1994) and Shay (2016) that the factory model is exclusively supply driven, expert led, hierarchical, homogeneous. Shay (2014) further avers that the kind of knowledge received by students to which the factory model curricula are delivered prepares those students for the workplace, not for the education of the mind. In other words, the limitation of such knowledge is that it has little to give

priority to the lived world experiences and cultural worldviews of the students (Pinar 2015). It is thus understandable why African scholars (e.g., Heleta 2016; 2018; Fanon 1963; Nyoni 2019; Shawa 2019; WaThiongo 1994) argue for curricula that embrace indigenous knowledge systems in the universities in Africa. I concur with such conceptualisations and subscribe to the view that African philosophical thought and social practices contribute significantly towards a new university in which the curriculum undergoes decolonisation.

The dominant idea of the curricula used in universities across the world is grounded on Taylor's (1911) factory model (Koopman 2019; Le Grange 2016; Ndlovu 2019). Taylor's model emphasises designing industrial systems to achieve specific products (Ndlovu 2019). This emphasis was echoed in Tyler's (1949) curriculum model in which curriculum is understood as a simple, tightly coupled system in which it is possible and desirable to align closely what students do in order to learn. Scholars (Gibbons et al. 1994; Koopman 2019; Le Grange 2016) are in agreement with Aoki's (1999) seminal work that instead of curriculum only focusing on curriculum as planned, it should also be viewed as lived, meaning how the curriculum is experienced by teachers and students. I concur with Le Grange (2016; 2017; 2019) that legitimising the curriculum as lived by students and teachers allows serious consideration of how students experience the contemporary university curriculum and use their experience as a basis for calling for its decolonisation.

Other scholars understand the discourse of curriculum change through the lens of social justice. As a result, their concern is not centred on what the curriculum is, but how it contributes to the production and reproduction of inequalities among people (Bernstein 1975; Ndlovu 2019; Thaman 1993). By implication, to ensure social justice for the consumers of the curricula, what is selected as curriculum content and methods of transmitting should be related to their cultures (Nyoni 2019; Shawa 2019; WaThiongo 1981). A curriculum which reflects the experiences and ideologies of both the teachers and students it is intended for is able to promote social justices. Unfortunately most curricula in Africa and other developing societies fail to take into account the experiences of the people it is created for.

As a follow-up on the complex nature of the process of decolonisation, Tuck and Yang (2018) and WaThiongo (1994) argue that the first step in the decolonisation discourse is the decolonisation of the mind. The ability to uncage or disentangle mental slavery is a progressive move towards becoming decolonised at a personal level (Chaka et al. 2017; Fomunyan 2017; Grosfoguel 2007). Because knowledge is embedded in language and culture, it is logical that for the African mind to be decolonised, the language of engagement needs to change (WaThiongo 1994). Those who subscribe to Wa Thiongo's (1994) perspective will naturally expect the use of indigenous languages as languages of instruction as a step towards realisation of decolonisation. However, as I have already highlighted in section 2.2.1, some South African universities have adopted English medium policies. Thus, such a shift highlights that effective centring of African epistemologies remains rhetoric. It remains an ideal as long as the African languages remain positioned on the periphery: this implies that African knowledge systems remain undervalued. Undervaluing African knowledge presents a landscape which triggers more debate on decolonisation discourse. This study explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

Different scholars have different views on what constitutes a decolonised curriculum. Schutte (2019) professes that decolonisation of the curriculum should not imply abolishing Western/Eurocentric knowledge but decentring it and developing gender and culturally inclusive curricula (2019: 202). Abolishing Western knowledge systems is problematic in that most of the African academics are moulded by the Western knowledges which they are unwilling to reject (Heleta 2016; 2018; Jansen 2017; 2019). Furthermore, abolishing Western knowledge systems is claimed to be against the neoliberal global agenda of producing graduate students who qualify to work anywhere in the world (Heleta 2018; Jansen 2017; Koopman 2019; Shawa 2019). It is conspicuous that in South African universities, the academics are expected to deliver a decolonised curriculum (Heleta 2018; Mheta et al. 2018; Schutte 2019; Williams 2019). The question to ask is whether the decolonial project will succeed if some academics who received Eurocentric knowledge remain unwilling to decentre and unlearn what they were taught and what they teach in their classrooms.

In a postcolonial era, curriculum transformation should be seen as an endeavour to acknowledge the changing geopolitics of knowledge by inculcating the understanding that epistemologies and worldviews should no longer be viewed as objective, universal or static (Nyoni 2019). Thus the decolonial think-tanks are challenged to rethink curriculum reform by addressing and interrogating to what level the curriculum must change in order to sustainably deimperialise and demystify institutional and structural imbalances common in higher learning institutions. Thus the African curriculum should be able to stand the test of time by being and remaining one of the multiple realities of global epistemological knowledge systems. In terms of the relationship between curriculum and decolonisation, the current South African university curriculum can be used as a basis for decolonisation. There are scholars who argue that the present South African higher education curricula are key drivers, which are used to reinforce a colonial breeding point, resulting in self-hatred, a great sense of inferiority and the culture of not interrogating the masters' voices (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2016; Sepota 2018; Schutte 2019).

The academic field of curriculum studies is embedded in the national culture of interests (Le Grange 2018; 2014). In the current post-apartheid context, the field of curriculum studies is fragmented along colonial lines and complicated conversations (Le Grange 2018; Pinar 2004; 2014). The concept of curriculum as complicated conversation was coined by Pinar (2004), a curriculum scholar and framed in the US, against the backdrop in which the US was in dire need of curriculum scholars who would raise the field's research flag high during times when the education system was being pestered by politicians (Le Grange 2018: 6; Pinar 2004).

As an honours postgraduate student at UNISA, I have witnessed the curriculum as complicated conversation in 2015-2016. During the latter period, the students voiced their concerns about excessive tuition fees, epistemic violence through the use of Western media of instruction, inequality of access to education and delivery of content which was largely divorced from student experiences. As a result of those protest movements, scholars across the globe ventured into heated contestations and research on curriculum related matters in South African higher education (Le Grange 2018). I opine that when researchers from diverse epistemic orientations focus on the

South African university curriculum issues, all disparate knowledges are thus decentred. One of the overall aims of such decentring will be to compare different equitable epistemologies for coexistence.

The relationship between decoloniality and coloniality is that decoloniality is a methodological, analytical or critique of colonisation (Le Grange 2018; Maldonado-Torres 2007; Mignolo 2009). Relating decoloniality and coloniality to the field of curriculum studies, one may wish to find answers to questions which have been raised such as, who controls the field of curriculum studies at an international level and in South Africa? Who is in control of educational institutions? Whose knowledge is being produced in the field and by whom (Le Grange 2018)? I further submit that it is equally important to interrogate what type of knowledge is delivered to students in higher education institutions. In finding answers to questions such as these, it is agreed that decoloniality implies critical interrogation of the intricacies and subtle nature of coloniality in curriculum development. As advanced by Waghid and Manthalu (2019), I concur that it is the responsibility of higher education institutions to reach out to and engage in dialogue with marginalised indigenous epistemologies. Such engagements will help break the power imbalances which exist in the hegemonic neoliberal global structures (Koopman 2019; Waghid and Manthalu 2019). I further argue that failure by universities to carry out engagement dialogues with marginalised epistemologies is tantamount to perpetuating the reproduction of inequalities. That will further illuminate how decolonial and/or critical race methodologies help to demonstrate that higher education institutions are manifestations of coloniality in the era of political independence in South Africa and even beyond.

2.2.4 Africanisation of curriculum

In framing the conceptualisation of Africanisation, I choose firstly to discuss the Fanonian school of thought. Doing so will enable me to highlight how Africanisation is related to concepts such as coloniality, decoloniality, curriculum and curriculum transformation. After that I seek to view Africanisation through eyes of scholars who use decolonisation and Africanisation interchangeably.

Fanon, the Algerian scholar, became disillusioned and disappointed when at the end of Algerian war, he realised that meaningful liberation in Algeria was mere rhetoric (Fanon 1963; Le Grange 2018; Pinar 2011). Due to his disillusionment, Fanon affirms that no decolonisation took place in Algeria; instead, Fanon describes the seeming decolonisation process as merely Africanisation. From a Fanonian viewpoint, political independence in African nations does not mean the same as decolonisation, but rather an obstacle to decolonisation. In his argument, independence means the Africanisation of colonialism (Le Grange 2018). I understand Fanon as expressing that independence in Africa is a metaphor in which powerful Africans colonise the less powerful under the guise of liberation. In other words, as Prah (2004) elucidates, Fanon's Africanisation pictures the systematic and deliberate deployment of Africans in positions of power to enable them to control the domains of society. This concept of Africanisation is comparable to Nkrumah's (1965) concept of neo-colonialism, which refers to new colonialism experienced in postcolonial contexts where those in power walk in the steps of their former colonisers to oppress their own kind.

Considering the Fanonian interpretation of Africanisation, it follows then that Africanisation of the curriculum would mean empowering the elite, influential Africans who hold positions of power to influence the 'what' and 'how' of the curriculum at the expense of the marginalised locals. The 'what' refers to the curriculum content and the 'how' to the methods of delivery of the content to the students. I argue then that if those who determine the 'what' and 'how' of the curriculum are neo-colonialists, then the essence of decolonisation is defeated. Contrary to the Fanonian school of thought, several other African scholars (Lockett 2018; Sepota 2019; Sepota 2019; Waghid 2019) argue that true decolonisation is slowly in process in African higher education contexts. I advance that neo-colonialism in curriculum engagements is an obstacle to effective curriculum transformation in Africa. The caution to be taken especially by adherents of Fanonian schools of thought is that when decolonisation is conflated with neo-colonialism of Africanisation, it may lead to an Africanisation of the curriculum that is exclusive of otherness (Manthalu and Waghid 2019; Waghid 2019).

Sepota (2019: 6) notes that curriculum transformation is synonymous to Africanisation of curriculum. Africanisation is expressed as the African Renaissance, moral

regeneration and reclaiming of African identity in the curriculum since the current South African curricula is largely developed and modelled in line with Westernised curriculum. Recent works (Giloj 2017; Lockett 2018) argue for global African thought while others (Hlatshwayo 2018; Mbembe 2016; 2017) have called for decentring of Western thought and repositioning of African philosophy that is rooted in democratic and social justice thought. Thus in this study, Africanising the curriculum means centring African content in the curriculum so that students draw from their own experiences in their learning. When African values, norms, cultures and knowledges play the centre part in teaching and learning, then Africanising the curriculum is a way of decolonising it by indigenising it. However, for the sake of embracing diversity, other knowledge systems should still be considered valuable wherever applicable.

From the discussion on Africanisation of curriculum in this section, I acknowledge a thin line of distinction between the concepts of decolonisation and Africanisation of the curriculum. Africanising the curriculum entails the centring of African thought, values and content in the curriculum. On the other hand, decolonisation of curriculum is the process of critical engagement in breaking the dominant colonial worldviews which are detached from the realities of the former colonised people's philosophies. Thus, decolonisation can take place in postcolonial context, while Africanisation may largely apply to the centring of African orientated curriculum content and pedagogical approaches in the African continent.

Having discussed the various concepts in the subsection above, I discuss the theoretical framework which underpinned this study in the next section.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding, selecting and integrating a framework in academic research are mandatory ingredients of quality research. It therefore follows that the term theoretical framework should be fully understood and well conceptualised. Proper understanding of the term leads a researcher to make the right choice of a theory in any particular study.

Scholars such as Grant and Osanloo (2014) define theoretical framework as the blueprint on which to build and support a study, while Ravitch and Riggan (2017) understand theory as a set of interconnected constructs, variables and propositions which reflect a particular way of viewing phenomena in order to successfully explicate and predict what is viewed. Similarly, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) define theory as a collection of intertwined constructs and definitions which aim to direct a research study for the purpose of predicting and explaining results of that particular study. Framework, on the other hand, refers to a set of ideas used to form decisions and judgment (Creswell 2015). Hence a theoretical framework can be understood as a blueprint which guides a research study (Grant and Osanloo 2014). A theoretical framework is the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed for a research study. Other scholars further explicate that a theoretical framework has to be based on a published theory and the theory is always attached to the theorist who developed it (Crawford 2019; Leshem and Trafford 2007; Marshall and Rossman 2016).

Several other scholars refer to theoretical framework as conceptual framework although they do not provide reasons for using the two terms synonymously (Le Roux 2016; Maxwell 2013; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). However, there are those who assert that there is a thin line which differentiates the two terms wherein concepts are understood as essential components of theories (Bryman 2012: 8). Thus, a conceptual framework is the relationship between the components of a theory and the impact on what is being investigated (Ngulube 2018). Scholars (Crawford 2020; Marshall and Rossman 2016) understand conceptual framework as the rationale for the study. Their view resonates with that of Ravitch and Riggan (2017) who describe the term as the argument for the study. In other words, conceptual framework therefore seeks to show the relationship of concepts to the roots of the study's purpose and alignment of the study parts (Crawford 2020: 39) Having noted thus, I concur with scholars who show the difference in these two terms. I argue that if the framework is associated with the theorist, for example Bell's (1980) interest convergence principle, or Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995) "Towards Critical Race Theory of Education", then they are examples of theoretical frameworks. The explications provided in the subsequent sections provide sets of organised, systematic interconnectedness of both Bell's and Ladson-Billings' propositions about race, whiteness and racial dominance and how it

results in educational inequalities for subordinate groups like people of colour. Thus, the propositions provide a clarification of the problematic nature of racism in society, hence they constitute theoretical frameworks.

Theoretical frameworks emerge from a myriad of sources depending on the disciplines or fields of study. As such, a researcher has to be wise in selecting the most suitable theoretical framework on which to build his/her study. Once a choice has been made, it follows that the researcher should explicate the theory and show how it has a bearing on the analysis of the research data. Creswell and Creswell (2018) assert that in qualitative research, qualitative theoretical perspectives may be used to interrogate the real world/phenomena. Such an understanding is linked to certain research methodologies and epistemological perspectives which inform the research methods (Creswell 2009; Guba and Lincoln 2005). I concur with Ngulube (2018) that, although some scholars opine that not much theory is used as background to qualitative research, qualitative research can start with a theory.

CRT was used in this study as a framework and lens to understand the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Scholars in social sciences sometimes combine theoretical frameworks to explain research data (Merriam 2009; Ngulube 2018), which promotes theoretical triangulation, which in turn enhances the researcher's understanding of the phenomena under investigation, thus increasing the validity of the explanations (Creswell 2015; Creswell and Creswell 2018). Two or more theories may be used to study a single phenomenon if they complement each other. In this study, I used two complementing theoretical frameworks on which the study is founded. Both theories share CRT legal principles. Bell's (1980) theory is rooted in critical race theoretical tenets while the latter is more of an application of the original CRT in the field of education.

For the past two decades, CRT has increasingly become part of the toolkit of educational researchers who seek to examine and critique educational issues (Lesdema and Calderon 2015; Mensah 2019). Thus, I deem it justifiable to frame my study on CRT since it is a current framework in educational research.

The next section deals with a definition of the concept of CRT.

2.3.1 The Critical Race Theory

The CRT is defined differently by different authors. I have thus chosen a few definitions to indicate what the theory entails.

Matsuda (1991:1331) understands CRT as:

“the work of progressive legal scholars of colour who are attempting to develop a jurisprudence that accounts for the role of racism in American law and that works towards the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination.”

In the same vein, Love (2018), defines the concept as a discourse of legal scholarship which originated in America in the 1970s depicting the injustices of traditional civil rights litigation to produce ongoing racial reform initiatives.

Tate (1997) explains CRT as a school of thought associated with critiquing racial narratives and interjected voice scholarship as a means to build theory and inform practice in the law. At the core of the above definitions is intent to dismantle legal systemic violence in the American legal discourse in order to create platforms for social justice. Although the definitions above are confined to the US contexts, the theory has been used in educational context in other countries that seek to address systematic injustices. As a result the theory is used in the South African higher education context by researchers such as Le Roux (2016) and Conradie (2016). Its relevance to the sector is based on the country’s recent past which was characterised by racial segregation known as apartheid. It is for this reason that the sector is in the process of curriculum transformation to accommodate the calls for decolonisation. Since the process is marred by racialised institutional imbalances, I used CRT theory to analyse the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

2.3.2 Origins of Critical Race Theory

The roots of CRT can be traced as far back as the 1960s Civil Rights and 1970s Critical Legal Studies (CLS) movements (Mensah 2019; Saetermoe, Chavira, Khachkian, Boyns and Cabello 2017) in the US law academy. It started as a reaction against the CLS. CLS was a law movement led by mostly white Marxist and post-modern legal scholars who were trying to unearth the ideological underpinnings of American jurisprudence (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). The CRT scholars attacked CLS due to its failure to acknowledge the permanence of racism and that race is an integral part of the systems of laws (Saetermoe et al. 2017; Sleeter 2017). According to CRT scholars, ignoring issues of race, racism, power and colour blindness was tantamount to promoting the status quo and its deeply entrenched institutional injustices (Lesdema and Caldron 2015; Mensah and Jackson 2018; Sleeter 2018).

The early writings in CRT began with Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman (Love 2018). The initial beginnings of CRT embrace the work of scholars such as Richard Delgado, James Calmore, Charles Lawrence and Mari Matsuda (Kozol 2005). Apart from these co-founders being informed by civil rights scholarship, CRT was also strongly influenced by feminist thought. In their theorisation, feminist CRT scholars such as Crenshaw (1991), Harris (1993; 1995), Matsuda (1991) and Ladson-Billings (2013) argue that there is intersectionality between gender and race in American society. These CRT founding scholars critiqued and interrogated the relationship between race, racism and power to transform society (Delgado and Stefancic 2017; Howard and Navarro 2016; Mensah 2019). They further argue that the traditional approaches to racial reform such as protests, marches and moral appeal to sensible citizens were less effective. Through the efforts of these scholars, other legal scholars began to share their frustrations with the early civil rights initiatives. The explicit ultimate goal of CRT is to contest all kinds of racial, gender and subordination in societies. Such an observation conforms to the assertion by Solorzano and Yosso (2001: 2) that the theory challenges the dominant discourse on race and racism.

There are five central tenets of CRT which form the theory's basic perspectives, pedagogy and methodology (Mensah 2019; Saetermoe et al. 2017: 42). These tenets have been summed up as:

1. The centrality of race and racism;
2. The challenge to dominant ideology;
3. An interdisciplinary perspective;
4. The importance of experiential knowledge;
5. A commitment to social justice (Bell 1980; Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Love 2018; Matsuda 1991; Mensah 2019; Solorzano and Yosso 2000).

Each of the aforementioned tenets is explained in the following subsections.

2.3.2.1 The centrality of race and racism

The first tenet of CRT is that race still matters hence the centrality of race and racism is the hallmark of CRT work (Garza and Ono 2016; Ladson-Billings 2013). According to Delgado and Stefancic (2017), CRT scholars view racism as a way in which societies do business, the common, everyday experience of most people of colour in America. CRT scholars postulate the omnipresence of racism and assert that its nature is incurable, especially in higher education contexts. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) profess that it is extremely difficult for white people to acknowledge the incurable nature of racism since it is deeply permeated in their mental and social structures. The centrality and permanency of racism is applicable to this study because the South African society is deeply characterised by a racialised past (Hurst 2016; Heleta 2018). This not only affected the society but all structures of society were impacted by the apartheid policies.

The 2015-2016 student protests in South African universities demonstrates that non-white students still feel marginalised due to the structural and institutional systems which favour Western cultures in the curriculum. Thus, without a commitment to foregrounding racism in academia and pedagogical practices, the university will remain a colonial post to propagate Western epistemological knowledge systems.

Similarly, CRT also acknowledges the intersectionality of race/racism with other identities (Solórzano 1998; Yosso 2005). This assumption tries to explicate the ways in which race and racism are used as tools to subordinate other identities of marginalised people. The idea of intersectionality is also applicable as in this current study as it focused on decolonisation and intersects with linguistic and racial backgrounds, home languages, cultures and ethnicity of the student body at institutions of higher learning. I further argue that the issue of medium of instruction also plays an integral part in the project of decolonisation of curriculum in any institution which employs Western or borrowed epistemological models which place indigenous knowledge languages and culture of the local people at the periphery of teaching and learning.

2.3.2.2 The challenge to dominant ideology

CRT interrogates the social hierarchy of inequalities. Thus, dominant social and cultural assumptions concerning culture, language, intelligence and language are interrogated and confronted (Love 2018). CRT challenges white privilege and refutes the liberal claims that institutions and people make about objectivity, meritocracy, colourblindness, the neutrality of race and equal opportunity (Solórzano and Yosso 2001). Writing about the problem of colourblindness in South African society, Mathebula (2019); Nyoni (2019), Ngwenya (2019) and Simukungwe (2019) are of the opinion that the narrative of *Rainbow Nation* is a construct which seeks to picture South Africa as a colour-blind nation which is no longer troubled by racism. I aver that *Rainbow Nation* can be understood as a construct used by some merely as camouflage of the self-interest, power and privilege of dominant groups in societies. However, the same concept could be used to show a nation of many languages and cultures which if accepted and recognised could create harmony. Through CRT, analysis of institutional imbalances and issues of decolonisation research, I problematise the concept of colourblindness in South African university context. The use of the colour-blind approach in higher education institutions reveals these institutions' lack of transformation. Issues of social justice are thus not adequately addressed in these institutions as students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are assimilated (Heleta 2018; Nyoni 2019; Shawa 2019).

The ideological positioning of Western languages is, among other myths, what CRT is interested in demystifying. The interest to demystify that way of thinking can be explained through the decolonisation debates and discourses which are currently topical in South African university institutions (Conradie 2016; Le Roux 2016; Ngwenya 2019). Chaka, Lephahala and Ngesi (2017) profess that critical analysis of the Eurocentric elements such as Western models in curricula content can result in the call for the promotion of African epistemologies in teaching and learning in the higher education scenarios in the country. Further clarifications by April (2019), Mathebula (2019) and Padayachee (2019) show how decolonisation through teaching and learning in African languages could eventually restore social and cognitive justice to the students who are violently excluded from effective learning by being taught in a second language.

2.3.2.3 The interdisciplinary perspective

CRT scholars have learnt to move across disciplinary boundaries so as to find platforms to connect with other relevant bodies of literature and share their perspectives (Garza and Ono 2016; Love 2018). The CRT has moved from traditional law studies to the field of education producing a number of educational studies framed on CRT, which have been conducted since its inception (Ledesma and Calderon 2015; Le Roux 2016; Mensah 2019, Mensah and Jackson 2018; Yosso 2002). The interdisciplinary perspective promotes the analysis of racism in both historical and modern contexts (Conradie 2016; Solorzano and Yosso 2001). The themes of original CRT are applied to educational studies in an effort to demystify issues of race, gender and class which are barriers to accessing equal educational opportunities especially for marginalised groups (Ladson-Billings 2013; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995).

I concur with Garza and Ono (2016) insight that the interdisciplinary nature of CRT plays a pivotal role in as far as it contributes to the theory's relevance as a paradigm in research. CRT's interdisciplinary nature entails that CRT researchers can draw upon other disciplines or frameworks such as feminism, history, sociology, liberalism and law to inform their analysis or understanding of racialised constructs within societies (Ladson-Billings 2009; 2013). This study draws from the South African

historical context such as apartheid, the hidden and explicit institutionalised racism and structural imbalances at in the country before and after 1994. By focusing on those historical backgrounds to contextualise the study, the interdisciplinary aspect of the CRT becomes evident in this study.

Within higher education among other institutions of learning, CRT has been used to consider the wide range of areas such as learning pedagogy, policy and policy development as they relate to university curriculum. I therefore argue that CRT provides a useful lens through which to explore topics such as perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

2.3.2.4 The importance of experiential knowledge

CRT theorists acknowledge that voices of experience are necessary and legitimate for understanding and providing an analysis of racial subordination (Dixson and Rousseau 2005; Love 2018; Mensah 2019). Other scholars, for example, Harris (1993), Ladson-Billings (1998), Mensah (2019), Sleeter (2017) and Solorzano and Yosso (2001), are of the opinion that experiential knowledge consists of storytelling, counter storytelling, narratives, family histories or cultures. It is from these narratives that the lived experiences of those involved in a phenomenon can be drawn (Ladison-Billings 2005; Garza and Ono 2016). The principle of counter storytelling evolved as a way of CRT critiquing the law and legal studies for failing to incorporate people of colour into scholarship (Bell 1976; 1980; Garza and Ono 2016; Matsuda 1991). It also came about due to the unwillingness to change or adapt to perspectives initiated by scholars of colour. As such, CRT scholars sought to effect changes by producing narratives of people of colour tantamount to testimonies which inform the legal study (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; Le Roux 2016). That strategy of using narratives of people of colour disrupted the normative personal and cultural narratives which glorified the marginalisation of people of colour (Delgado 1990). Thus giving voice to the oppressed is a way to validate experiential knowledge hence pushing back against maintenance of colour-blindness (Kennemer and Knaus 2019). Counter stories disrupt normative cultural and personal narratives which reify the marginalisation of people of

colour (Garza and Ono 2016). Delgado (1990) posits that people of colour or marginalised and muted groups speak from their experience about the racist nature of societies. That allows their stories to become a common platform to help deconstruct, reconstruct and construct the discourses of the dominant groups in society. Delgado (1990) further elaborates that the discourse of deconstruction is a human agency given to develop the construction of equitable power relations. Having discussed the value of experiential knowledge, I also pay heed to Ladson-Billings' (2005) caution against focusing on storytelling and counter narratives to the exclusion of the central ideas of what such stories imply. A lack of caution in that regard is tantamount to being uncritical.

CRT is a robust theory with an original aim to focus on the black/white dichotomy. Currently, the theory has developed into critical theory which falls into a broader understanding of experiences from any other point of otherness apart from that of black/white.

2.3.2.5 Commitment to social justice

Another theme of CRT is its commitment to social justice. According to CRT, whites have been recipients of civil rights legislation at the expense of people of colour (Bell 1980; Delgado and Stefancic 2017; Harris 1993; Matsuda 1991; Ladson Billings 1998; Le Roux 2016). Because of that injustice, theorists such as Bell (1980), Delgado (2009) and Delgado and Stefancic (2001) strongly argue for the demystification, interrogation, and destabilisation of affirmative action in the US. These authors are of the opinion that the affirmative action programme was designed to promote the interests of the dominant groups. White females benefitted more from the programme than the intended recipients, the people of colour. Thus the CRT sought to challenge the historical *Brown versus Board of Education*, which they described as inadvertently an eventual victory for whites, although it appeared as a victory for the people of colour (Bell 1980; Solorzano and Yosso 2000). What the CRT tries to reveal is that when there are changes in the law apparently to serve the interest of people of colour, such policy changes are actually meant to benefit the dominant group. At its core, the theory provides clarification and answers to the question by civil rights activist leaders asked

during the 1970s. Civil activists questioned why the Brown decision succeeded during a conservative period well known for anti-communist McCarthyism yet 1970s civil right gains stalled after an unprecedented decade of legal successes and broad social change (Bell 1980). The activists realised that the Brown versus Board of Education decision was meant to impress the international community into believing that the American government had indeed transformed its educational policies to recognise people of colour and place them at the same footing with whites. Behind this impression, the reality still remained that racism, inequality and marginalisation of students of colour characterised all education systems in the US.

Scholars such as Hurst (2016), Mbembe (2015), Mayaba et al. (2018) and McKinney (2017) testify that African knowledge; lived experiences and histories are not adequately represented in contemporary curricula. That is a gap which creates social injustices. I argue for the use of critical methodologies such as the CRT toolkit. CRT was used in this study as a tool of analysing the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

As the founding scholars to introduce CRT in the field of education, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) assert that educational inequalities were the logical and predictable result of a racialised society in which discussions of race and racism continue to be marginalised and silenced. From such an assertion, Solorzano and Yosso (2000:25) propose that the CRT framework can be used as a tool which seeks to identify, analyse and change the structural aspects of education which promote dominant and subordinate binary positions in and out of the classroom.

Scholars such as Chaka et al. (2017), Jansen (2019), Makhubela (2019), Ngwenya (2019) and Nyoni (2019) urge higher education institutions to become agents of transformation towards attainment of social justice, which is impossible to attain without a clear vision of the actual experiences of all students. This study served to illuminate the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Following up on advice by Crawford (2019) and Mensah (2019), availing participants'

room to voice their perceptions reduced my reliance on assumptions or deficit thinking. My study intends to move the discourse of decolonisation in South Africa, Africa and other postcolonial settings forward.

The next section deals with Bell's theory of interest convergence, but it starts with a brief overview of the theorist.

2.3.4 Brief overview of Derrick Bell's life

Derrick Albert Bell Junior, was born on 6 November 1930, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He enrolled at Duquesne University where he earned his B.A degree in 1952. After graduating at Duquesne University, he left the country for Korea as part of the US Air force. He returned from the war in 1954 and enrolled at University of Pittsburgh Law School where he earned an L.L.B degree in 1957 (Kumasi 2011). He worked for the Justice Department from 1957 to 1959 then joined Thurgood Marshall where he worked as an overseer of 300 segregation cases in the Legal Defense Fund. He later on became the deputy director of civil rights at the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare and then became a law teacher at Western Centre in 1968. In 1971, he became a tenured professor at Harvard Law School, which marked him as the first Afro American professor at Harvard School.

Bell's earliest writings challenged the prevailing traditional, philosophical position of liberal civil rights (Kumasi 2011: 206). He was among the scholars who noted the ever-growing sentiments that CLS left little room to address the issue of racial inequality. He is regarded as the founder of CRT and his Yale Law Review of 1976 emerged as seminal piece for CRT.

Derrick Bell passed away on 5 October 2011 at the age of eighty (Cummings 2012). He is celebrated as the founding father of CRT who orchestrated the blueprint which guides the development of the theory.

2.3.4.1 Derrick Bell's interest convergence principle

The foundation for CRT was laid by Derrick Bell in two article reviews: *Serving Two Masters: Integration Ideals and Client Interests in School Disintegration Litigation* (1976) and *Brown versus Board of Education Convergence Dilemma* (1980). The principle of interest convergence originated with his 1980 seminal work in which he strongly argued against the *Brown versus Board of Education* (1954) decision. The *Brown versus Board of Education* was the Supreme Court's ruling which outlawed *de jure* segregation of public schools in the US (Mensah 2019). According to Bell (1980), the call for desegregation was not altruism. Instead, it was a step towards the advancement of American Cold War objectives in which the US was in competition with the Soviet Union for the loyalties of the third world countries (Milner 2008).

Derrick Bell's (1980) interest convergence principle is an essential principle of CRT which asserts that the dominant groups or institutions will tolerate advances for racial justice and equity only when those advances suit the self-interests of those groups. In other words, the interests of people of colour in achieving racial equality will only be accommodated when it converges with the interests of those in power. Such a situation is often referred to as the convergence of interest principle (Bell 1980). Ladson-Billings (2013) provides practical examples to substantiate Bell's proposition. Firstly is the instance of a policy example of interest convergence when the then President JF Kennedy issued Executive Order 10925 in 1961. The order included a government provision that government contractors should take affirmative action to ensure that applicants were employed and treated without regard to their race, creed, employment, colour or national origin. According to Ladson-Billings (2013), the intention of that order was to affirm the government's commitment to equal opportunity. Interestingly, four years later, President Lyndon Johnson issued Executive order 11246. The order prohibited discrimination based on race, colour, religion, gender and national origin. However, the agenda behind it was to make sure that affirmative beneficiaries were white women and by extension, other whites (Lopez 2003).

It thus implicitly shows that white America at that point in time remained unwilling to change the traditional policies and practices that effectively deprived the minority

groups or people of colour (Bell 1980; 2004; Hochschild 1995). Through a critical examination of the American judicial system, Bell asserts that the judicial system is used as an instrument to preserve the status quo and only periodically as a refuge of the oppressed or marginalised people (Bell 1992). Salient is the point that the idea of refuge only occurs when the policies behind will afford the dominant group to gain something out of it. Otherwise when the interests of the people of colour represent the status quo, it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible to expose racism as a means to pursue racial equality (Dixson and Rousseau 2005; Harris 1993).

According to Bell (2004), when the interests of the subordinate group are considered, it is either due to racial sacrifice or racial fortuity. In this case, racial sacrifice connotes an outcome which is experienced by the minority or oppressed groups (Bell 1992; 2004; Crowder 2014; Milner 2008). A compromise is effected which relies on the involuntary sacrifice on the part of minority group members (Bell 2004). The positive outcomes for the oppressed groups are just fortuitous rather than intended. Thus, no benefit experienced by the oppressed is planned for but it tends to happen by chance. Inherent in the interest of convergence theory are the principles of loss and gain as well as a self and systemic imperative.

The two principles are discussed below.

2.3.4.2 The loss and gain binary

Issues of loss and gain are intricately interwoven in the principle of interest convergence (Bell 1980). The ability and will of the dominant group to make difficult decisions towards attainment of equitable policies and practices may have negative implications (Bell 2004; Solorzano and Yosso 2001). For instance, there are times when the dominant groups will have to lose something valuable in the negotiation process. Seminal works by CRT scholars assert that power, esteem, status or ability for members of dominant groups to reproduce those benefits to their children or beneficiaries may have to be lost (Harris 1993; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; Lopez 2003; Solorzano and Yosso 2000). It should be noted that in his theorising, Bell (1980) opines that such types of loss hit hard at the hearts of the losers. To them the loss

implies that their whiteness or value/status has depreciated. I concur with scholars such as Crowder (2014) and Dixon and Rousseau (2005) and Milner (2013) that interest convergence suggests a threat to the social status of whites. In the context of this study, the impact threatens not only whites but also other people of colour who hold powerful, influential positions in the education systems such as higher learning institutions.

In the same vein, CRT theorists sought to challenge the historical Brown versus Board of Education, which they describe as an inadvertent eventual victory for whites (Bell 1980; Love 2018; Solorzano and Yosso 2001). Love (2018) accuses the Brown versus Board of Education as a failed case since it failed to improve the education of Afro-American students substantively as it represented a restrictive instead of an expansive view of equality (Bell 1980; 2004; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). What was needed was a vision of education which challenged the fundamental structure of schools that reproduced the same inequitable social hierarchies which exist in society.

It is important to note that this section concentrated on explaining the theory without linking it to the current study. The relevance and implications of the theories to the current study is discussed in sub section 2.5. The next section is an explication of Ladson-Billings and Tate's 1995 CRT of Education.

2.3.4.3 A self and systemic imperative

Bell (1980; 2004) and Lopez (2003) assert that racism usually remains strongly in place but social progress happens at the pace which is determined by the white people as reasonable. Milner (2008) follows upon the assertion by advancing that change is purposefully and deliberately slow and happens to satisfy the will and design of those in power.

Building upon the interest convergence principle, Bell (1980) explicates that whites in the US believe that injustice may be rectified effectively without changing the status of the whites. By implication, those whites may be seen to be supportive of equity- related policies and practices but deeply engrained in their beliefs is that their status should

not be changed by those policies and their implementation (Bell 1980; Milner 2008). Thus as averred by Castagno and Lee 2007:4), the dominant groups will advance social self-interests. Relating this to my current study, it implies that people who are in power in university contexts are supportive of policies and practices which do not discriminate against those in power (Heleta 2018; Mudimbe 2015; 2016). Thus the people, who influence policy making and implementation more often than not, protect their own systems, statuses and experiences in the institutional cultures. I concur that it is unfortunate for those in the subordinate groups because their interests can only be considered if they promote self-interests of the more powerful (Milner 2008).

Love (2018) attests that CRT is amongst the theoretical constructs which link racism and educational inadequacies to the academic injustices. In the 1990s, the academy began to witness increased reports of incidents of racism and differential treatment on college campuses in the US (Ladson-Billings 1998). In reaction to that observation, scholars in the field of education started to use CRT in their studies as a tool to address race related matters and many other institutional barriers which affected Afro American students at predominantly white institutions of learning (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; Love 2018; Ladson-Billings 1998). For example, Ladson-Billings and Tate were inspired to apply CRT tenets in the field of education at an annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) which was held in 1993 (Ladson-Billings 2013:34). Their intensive reading of critical race scholarly work by authors such as Bell (1980), Crenshaw (1988) and the hostility they got from the majority of the attendees of the AERA meeting spurred them to work on an article which finally emerged as a CRT theory of education published in 1995 (Ladson-Billings 2013). A few years after the publication of their paper, several other scholars started publishing scholarly works on CRT in education (Ladson-Billings 1998; Solórzano and Yosso 2001; Tate 1997). Because the field of CRT in education was a relatively new field, it lured many young scholars who were looking for fresh ways to think about their work and new methodologies for race scholarship (Ladson-Billings 2013).

It is important that I indicate that in the preceding discussion, I concentrated in explaining the interest convergence theory with little application to the current study. The relevance and implications of the two theories which I use in this study are

discussed in sections which follow a discussion of Ladson-Billings and Tate theory which is provided in the next section.

2.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE CRT IN EDUCATION

Yosso (2002) defines CRT in education as a set of perspectives, methods and pedagogy which identify, analyse and transform structural, cultural and interpersonal areas of education which maintain the marginalisation and subordination of African American students by focusing on the challenges or racism in curriculum issues. Ledesma and Calderon (2015: 207) see the importance of applying CRT in education as its ability to reveal the manifestation and persistence of race and racism throughout the education system. Lynn and Parker (2006) define the concept as the critiquing of racism as a system of exploitation which examines the historic and current constructions of race in our society in particular to how these issues are manifested in schools. Other scholars point out that CRT in education deals with building, engaging and enacting critical race pedagogical practices which have the potential to empower students of colour and simultaneously dismantle colour-blindness, meritocracy, linguicism and other types of subordination (Kohli 2012; Kohli and Solorzano 2012).

In a nutshell, CRT in education concerns the application of critical race theoretical principles to education systems with the aim to dismantle systemic injustices. In this study, I use CRT propositions to explore the decolonisation of the university curriculum in South African higher education.

In the next subsection, I provide an overview of Professors Ladson-Billings and William Tate as academic partners well known for their seminal article *Towards a Critical Race Theory of Education*.

2.4.1 Ladson-Billings and Tate as academic partners

Professor Gloria Ladson-Billings is an African American pedagogical theorist born in 1947 in Philadelphia (Weschenfelder 2019). She is well known for her ground breaking work in the field of culturally relevant pedagogy and critical race theory.

Professor Ladson-Billings was inspired to work in the field of cultural relevant pedagogy in the late 1980s when people started paying more attention to racial achievement gaps in the US (Weschenfelder 2019). She is a fervent advocate of equity in education for all African American students (De Silva, Gleditsch, Job, Jesme, Urness, and Hunters (2018). Her current research examines the pedagogical practices of teachers who are successful with African American students and CRT application to education.

Professor William Tate is an African American academic who earned his doctorate in maths education in 1992 from the University of Maryland, a master's degree in Psychiatric Epidemiology from Washington University School of Medicine, a M.A.T in Mathematics from the University of Texas and a bachelor's degree in Economics from North Illinois University (Kumasi 2011). He is well known for being co-founder of *The Critical Race Theory of Education*, a seminal article he co-authored with Professor Ladson-Billings. Professors Ladson-Billings and William Tate are amongst the renowned CRT scholars whose work have contributed greatly to the field of education through their 1995 seminal article, *Towards a Critical Race Theory of Education*. Their theory was used in this study as another framework and lens to understand medium of instruction as an aspect of decolonisation of higher education in South Africa.

In the following subsection, their theory is discussed.

2.4.2 Towards a Critical Race Theory of Education

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) theorise race and make use of it as an analytical tool to understand inequalities in schools as well as varied academic achievement based on race and gender. They argue and provide new perspectives from law and social sciences; thus they use an interdisciplinary approach in their theorisation.

They (1995) centre their theorising on the following:

1. Race is a significant factor in determining inequity in the US.
2. US society is based on property rights rather than on human rights.

3. The intersection of race and property creates an analytical tool through which social and schooling inequality can be understood.

In the next section, I expand on the three propositions listed above.

2.4.2.1 Race as a significant factor in determining inequality

In their first proposition, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995: 48) posit that “race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequality in the United States.” Although the problematic nature of race is conspicuous, the two scholars emphasise that race remains under theorised. This claim is made in the context in which most theoretical and epistemological considerations during the time of writing the article were largely framed on gender paradigms like CRT in feminism (Delgado 2002; Ladson-Billings 2013; Mensah and Jackson 2018). Another reason for the lack of consideration of race related inequalities is that most scholarly research used Marxist and Neo-Marxist models (Matsuda 1991; Ladson-Billings 2013). Writing about gender and Marxist based analyses in research, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argue that that the use of Marxist ideological approaches although beneficial has limitations. The two scholars believe that amongst such limitations are the Marxist tendency which tends to naturalise whiteness and to oversimplify race (Ladson-Billings 2009; 2013). The naturalising of whiteness results in the embracing of the white race as superior and hegemonic as natural and normal (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; Ladson-Billings 2013; Omi and Winant 1986).

Drawing from the social science meta-propositions, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) concur with Omi and Winant (1986) who claim that race theories were not prioritised in social science and as such remain least developed. According to Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), prior theorising of race was not systematically used to analyse educational inequalities. The two scholars also position themselves as subscribers to scholars such as Omi and Winant (1986) and Woodson and Du Bois (1969) who used race as a theoretical lens to assess school inequality in American contexts.

In their second proposition, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) aver that race contributes significantly explaining inequality in the US. They base their argument on the premise that class and gender based perspectives are less powerful to clarify the variance in school experiences as well as varied academic achievement. The theorists explicate that both class and gender can converge but they cannot be used as standalone variables to elaborate on all educational achievement discrepancies between whites and students of colour (Ladson-Billings 2013; Garza and Ono 2016; Love 2018).

2.4.2.2 United States (US) society is based on property rights rather than on human rights

Ladson-Billings and Tate's second proposition deals with the issue of property in the US context. The two scholars situate their proposition in the context of CRT. Thus they subscribe to scholars such as Delgado (2002) who argues for the following aspects:

1. A need for a reinterpretation of civil laws in light of the ineffectuality of the argument that laws intended to remedy justice were often undermined.
2. The traditional claim of legal neutrality, objectivity, colour-blindness and meritocracy in American society should be challenged.
3. It is imperative to reformulate the legal doctrine so that it reflects the perspectives of those who have experienced and been victimised by racism.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) explicate that the problem of the US legal doctrine is that traditional civil rights approaches in solving inequalities depend on the rightness of democracy while ignoring the structural inequality of capitalism (Garza and Ono 2016; Love 2018). They further denounce democracy in the US, arguing that it was built on capitalism. They strongly believe in a democratic government with an economic system other than capitalism. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995:53) opine that white capitalists in the US were the ones who enjoyed the franchise. The African Americans in the US were constructed as property and their ability to possess property has been a central feature of power in America (Harris 1993; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995).Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) highlight that only white Americans owned property hence social benefits accrued largely to the property owners. They further

explicate that the issue of property relates to education in both clear and hidden ways. Those with better property are entitled to better schools. Implicitly, curricula in rich schools represent intellectual property and the quality and quantity of the curricula vary with the property value of the schools.

2.4.2.2 The intersection of race and property

In their theorising of the relationship between property and education Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) elaborate that the availability of enriched intellectual property delimits the opportunity to learn and standard details of what students should learn. By implication, the curricula or intellectual property must be reinforced by physical properties, such as state of the art technologies (science and computer laboratories, libraries and highly qualified and licensed teachers). The theory shows that, on the contrary, schools which serve poor students of colour are unlikely to have these state of the art resources. As a result, most students in such schools have limited opportunity to learn.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) theorise that the intersection of race and property is a central construct in understanding the CRT's approach to education. Following up on Harris' (1993) contribution to CRT, Ladson-Billing and Tate argue that slavery linked the privilege of whites to the subordination of blacks through the legal discourse which converted blacks into objects of property. Furthermore, the settlement of Native Americans in the seized land supported white privilege through an intricate, subtle system of property rights (Ladson-Billings 2009). That system promoted a condition in which the race of the natives became a possession right which was invisible and justifiable. The unfortunate effect of this arrangement was the victimisation of blacks and other people of colour and a construction of whiteness as the ultimate property. Harris (1993) defines possession as that which whites alone possess which is a valuable property.

In explicating how race and property intersect, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) elaborate the following:

1. Rights to use and enjoyment;
2. Reputation and status property;
3. The absolute right to exclude.

On the rights to use and enjoyment, legally whites could use and enjoy the privileges of whiteness (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995:59; McIntosh 1990). Economic, cultural and social privileges are performatives and pleasurable for whites in the education context. Their practicality is apparent when whiteness provides white students the opportunity for extensive use of school property (Kozol 2005; Milner 2008). In addition, the curricula in affluent white schools promote critical thinking and logic (Kozol 2005; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; McIntosh 1990).

On reputation and status property, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) clarify that to damage some aspect of someone's reputation is tantamount to damaging their property. It is opined that in the case of race, referring a white person as black is equal to defaming them (Solórzano and Yosso 2001). A typical example given by the two theorists is that of identifying a school or learning programme as non-white, which belittles its status if it serves the white population (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). The user of bilingual education in US is regarded as non-white hence second language learning is rendered low status.

Writing about the absolute right to exclude, it is observed that in the US context, whiteness is understood as the absence of contamination or influence of blacks or people of colour (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). The absolute right of exclusion was practised initially by denying blacks' access to schooling and later through maintenance of separate schooling systems: private and funded schools for the privileged white race and ordinary urban public poorly resourced schools for students of colour (Garza and Ono 2016).

Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995) work came about partly because they argued that class and gender based reasoning were not adequate to explain all the differences in school experience and performance. They built their work on the work of a number of previous scholars such as W.E.B DuBois and Carter G. Woodson. CRT in education

in the 1970s and 1980s was characterised by scholars such as Sleeter and Grant (1987) who explained educational inequalities through cultural, historical and inclusion lenses which did not recognise the importance of non-white categories in school curriculum; thus, the scholars advocated multicultural approaches so as to accommodate students of colour whose cultures and histories were ignored and excluded from school curriculum. Multicultural education contributed a robust set of cultural practices and knowledges which are important for learning and understanding differences between whites and students of colour (Howard and Navarro 2016; Jordan 1985). Such works provided frameworks upon which Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995) work emerged. I concur with Howard and Navarro (2016) that work prior to Ladson-Billings and Tate's CRT of education are important. They played an instrumental role in moving away from the deficit explications which had become embedded in literature concerning students of colour.

2.5 APPLICATION OF CRT TO THE FIELD OF EDUCATION OUTSIDE AMERICAN CONTEXT

CRT developed as other interested scholars applied CRT tenets in the education context. In the application of CRT to education, Freire (1970) delineated pedagogy with the aim to liberate the oppressed people in education systems. The purpose of education is understood by critical pedagogy scholars as raising critical awareness of the oppressed by making them understand the broader structures which perpetuate injustices. In the school environment, it is only when learners develop that awareness of inequitable historical, social, economical and political values that they can be in a position to be truly empowered to be agents of change in their communities (Freire 1970).

The use of CRT went beyond US geographical boundaries to Britain in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The famous British CRT scholar, Gillborn, was the first to come up with his CRT seminal work titled *Racism and Education: Coincidence or Conspiracy?* Because Gillborn's (2008) work is the pioneering CRT in the British field of education, it is relatively new in the UK. British scholars who have subsequently applied CRT in education in the UK include Hylton (2009), and Gillborn (2010; 2015;

2018). Cole (2017) claims that the success of CRT scholarship largely depends on its use of historical material of Black/ British activism. It is crucial to note that the CRT educational research conducted in the UK borrows from the CRT tenets which originated in the critical race studies in the US (Cole 2017; Crawford 2019; Gillborn 2015).

CRT has also developed from mere qualitative approaches to adoption of quantitative CRT studies. In the educational research in the UK, scholars such as Gillborn, Warmington and Demack (2018) and Garcia, Lopez and Velez (2018) introduced 'Quantitative Critical Race Theory' which calls for a better understanding of how quantitative methods are frequently mobilised in uncritical ways which have produced racialised knowledge which operates to the advantage of dominant white interests. They propose five principles which can be used to guide quantitative race theory research and conscientise researchers to the multiple hidden ways in which racialised assumptions can shape quantitative studies. Although my current study is a qualitative study, I deemed it necessary to go into some detail in explaining the quantitative CRT to highlight the levels to which CRT has developed.

Crawford (2019) summarises the principles as follows:

1. Centrality of racism is an original CRT tenet which stipulates that race is more than a mere variable. Racism cannot be obviously identified as a thing which can be measured.
2. Numbers are not neutral because quantitative data are gathered and analysed in ways that highlight and protect interests of white dominated institutions. As such, statistical treatments need to be interrogated to guard against the unwitting shaping of quantitative data.
3. Categories are neither natural nor given. Thus the historical contexts shape quantitative research.
4. Voice and insights are vital. Data cannot speak for itself since quantitative data is open to many interpretations which are usually conflicting. Thus there is no single correct understanding of social statistics.

5. Numbers for social justice is a principle that explicates commitment to use quantitative data as an anti-oppressive praxis. This is done to support justice and challenge dominant treatment of white working class educational attainment.

By implication Crawford (2019) promotes qualitative critical race theory by attacking a focus on similar research only quantitatively. Qualitative approaches in CRT are promoted because race is deeply entrenched in the fabric of a nation's institutions and socio-political discourses (Crawford 2019; Garcia, Lopez and Velez and Solorzano 2018). I profess that these scholars certify that undertaking a qualitative CRT approach in educational research is appropriate. In this study, I used a qualitative approach and CRT underpinnings to analyse data on perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

In the next section, I critique CRT.

2.6 CRITIQUE OF CRT

At its developmental stages, CRT has been subjected to criticism with some scholars relegating it to "a lunatic core of radical legal egalitarianism" (Crenshaw 2011: 131). Darder and Torres (2004) denounce CRT's use of race as a central category of analysis in educational debates around racism to the exclusion of a substantive critique of capitalism. I am however skeptical about Darder and Torres. While they blatantly denounce the CRT scholars for failing to relate race to capitalism, they might have overlooked the contributions of Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) in that regard. Let me draw the attention of such critics to the pains which Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) took in elaborating that race has to be theorised to fill the gap created by Marxist and Neo-Marxist ideologies in research, which only focused on classism and gender, intentionally ignoring how the capitalist school of thought helped to silence minority and marginalised groups in the society.

Numerous critiques have been brought forward against CRT. Scholars (Ledesma and Calderon 2015: 206; Dixson and Rousseau 2005; Ladson-Billings 2005) emphasise that CRT scholars should always couple contemporary work with the CRT founding legal tenets for their work to remain typically critical. It is only when critical race education scholars' link their work to original CRT literature that their work can be more actualised. Ladson-Billings (2005) explicates that whenever there is dialogical approach between CRT and critical race education, readers and prospective scholars will understand how CRT has developed over time.

Some scholars argue that the assumption that whiteness and blackness are understood in homogenous ways is not always practically correct (Schulz and Fane 2015; Vandeyar 2016). As a follow-up to such a claim, I argue that there are some black elites who have climbed the social and economic ladders in educational institutions and landed in dominant groups in which they consciously or unconsciously become neo-colonialists in their practices.

Other anti-CRT scholars are concerned that CRT research centres on the concept of white supremacy. As an example, Marxist scholars attack CRT for over reliance on white supremacy to explain the prevalence of racism and capitalism in western society (Cole 2017). I concur with Cole (2017) that in concentrating on white supremacy, CRT scholarship may be blind to the fact that they become unclear about the nature of what a more just world should be. As a progressive step, I propose that CRT should expose the ills associated with not only white supremacy, but also neo-colonialist ills in educational institutions. I further suggest that the analysis in CRT studies should not end at attacking what is bad; instead, CRT researchers should go a step further to look for ways to eradicate the white/ black binaries so as to create third spaces of negotiations for the sake of progress. As asserted by Bhabha (1994), the creation of third hybrid spaces provides new spaces in which merged groups learn to co-exist.

The CRT theories are blamed for paying lip service to the ideological nature of education (Cole 2017; Jansen 2009). Research conducted in the first decade of 21st century shows that critical theory fails to empower teachers to deal with the deeper complex challenges faced in post-conflict classrooms (Jansen 2009). Thus, such

research illuminates that CRT in its more radical forms divides the world (Jansen 2009; 2017). I submit to such criticism levelled against CRT, but to a limited extent. Although radical forms of CRT divide the world, I argue that progressive CRT researchers will not leave the division static. I further aver that the divided world scenarios in education institutions, such as those in South Africa, provide strong historical backgrounds in relation to the development of CRT based studies in the education systems, which warrant further examination. Further research based on contexts marred by a divided world of dominant- subordinate group binaries can be used as fertile grounds for more research on inequalities experienced in education around the world. Notwithstanding that CRT promises ways of solving injustices which are not always practically achievable (Cole 2017; Jansen 2009; Jansen 2017), I concur that the ideas of CRT are stimulating and informative (Cole 2017; Le Roux 2016).

The next section is centred upon the relevance of CRT in education contexts outside South Africa.

2.7 RELEVANCE OF CRT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN THE US, UK AND AUSTRALIA

In this section, evidence is provided to show the relevance of CRT in contemporary educational studies in settings in the US, UK and Australia. Although regarded as evolving in the US legal scholarship which obviously deployed an American centred analysis, I concur with Le Roux (2016) and Conradie (2016) that the CRT propositions are transferrable to different contexts in the world and particularly to contemporary South Africa where the significance of race is conspicuous in society and its schooling system which is inclusive of higher education.

Race is an important, relevant and topical issue in education in many countries (Mensah 2019). Some scholars aver that the concept of race is under theorised in the field of education (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; Ladson-Billings 2013). Other scholars such as Mensah (2019) and Milner, Pearman and McGee (2013) opine that race is under theorised in teacher education. Much CRT framed research has been done in the US contexts. In a recent study to discuss the educational experiences of

a female teacher of colour in science teacher education, findings revealed that certain ethnic groups of women are marginalised in both educational theory and practice (Mensah 2019). The study showed that science teacher education refutes the dominant ideology and white privilege by validating and centring the experiences of teachers of colour in the US education system. The voice of people is heard and their racialised, gendered and class experiences reveal CRT as a current, relevant tool of analysis in research.

Similar studies which focused on teachers of colour revealed that voices of such teachers are almost non-existent, ignored or silenced (Kohli 2018; Mensah 2016; Mensah and Jackson 2018; Sleeter 2017). Because one of the tenets of CRT is to use stories and narratives as a way of building cohesion within minority groups and deconstructing the mindset created by dominant group narratives, it shows that CRT methodologies are still relevant in the 21st century (Delgado 2001). Without sharing voices of the voiceless we could remain blind to the inequalities in educational programmes in various schooling systems around the world.

At California State University, the Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity (BUILD PODER) is a curriculum programme offered to students to help them understand institutional policies and practices which may hinder them from excelling in higher education or learning to confront social barriers and inequalities and discrimination (Saetermoe et al. 2017). Such programmes raise the CRT flagship as they help in promoting social justice and contest all kinds of class subordination and racial discrimination.

In a study which critically reflects on the nature of whiteness in British education systems and how it can be addressed, Gillborn (2019) contends that whiteness is deeply entrenched in schooling systems in the UK. Several studies conducted in similar British context revealed that people of colour in British schools and higher education institutions are often denied opportunities to work in such institutions (Sian 2017). Teachers and lecturers of colour are most likely to be questioned of their ability to execute their duties effectively merely because of who they are (Bhopal and Chapman 2019; Gillborn 2019). Upon such a revelation, Gillborn (2019) advises that

antiracist studies should be conducted to find solutions to the problems of inequalities due to racism. Thus, one can see that concerns about race and racism persist as a dilemma in the UK context.

Sian (2017) conducted a CRT framed study to examine the experiences of racism encountered by academics working within British universities. Findings from the study demonstrate the following: a) a stark underrepresentation of academics of colour, their experience of a lack of institutional support in curriculum design and teaching and their experience of day-to-day racism; b) embedded practices of institutional racism and sexism which are experienced by male and female academics of colour; and c) emotional and psychological trauma experienced by academics of colour at all career levels.

In dealing with such multifaceted incidents of racism scholars such as Adams (2017), Sian (2017) and Williams (1991) propose the provision of clear access to progression to support academics of colour. Sian (2017) further recommends some conceptual dialogue around institutional racism, Eurocentric knowledge production and the impact of structures of whiteness in British higher education. Lived experiences of the academics of colour in Sian's study illuminate what other scholars have documented that there is ongoing institutional racism in England higher education (Adams 2017). From the empirical CRT studies I have reviewed in British educational contexts, very little has been done to promote racial equality for people of colour in British higher education. Thus, with little support from the white majority, there is still a long way to go in dismantling the structures of white privilege in Britain higher education institutions. I propose that with increased studies conducted through critical race analysis, institutional racial ills may eventually be exposed and reduced.

CRT studies have also contributed to Australian educational research. Australia is a context in which the Aboriginal people have been marginalised for a long period (Edgeworth 2015; Leonardo 2015; Manathunga 2018). Because of that historical background, educational studies framed on CRT are topical and relevant in Australia. Schulz and Fane (2015) explored how discourses of race circumscribe the efforts of white students and teachers, often resulting in unintended reproduction of white race

privilege. Findings from the study indicated that white teachers often contribute to the reproduction of white privilege in their teaching approaches due to the nature of teacher education in Australia. Such findings resonate with Matias and Zembylas' (2014) study on challenges of teacher education where a predominantly white cohort is resistant to rethinking racism and white supremacy.

In moving the debate forward, Marias and Zembylas (2014) challenge researchers into thinking how best to interrogate race related problems in education. Thus, as claimed by Leonardo (2015), such Australian contexts are fertile ground for use of critical theory based studies to help construct pathways towards genuinely engaging in anti-racist practice for the promotion of social justice in contexts with people from diverse racial backgrounds. Santa and Akhurst (2019) used a CRT paradigm in their study which argues for a critical creative pedagogy as a means of meaningfully engaging with indigenous and decolonial ideologies in the Australian education system. In resonance with Gillborn (2018), Schulz and Fane (2015), Smith, Tuck and Yang (2019) and Santa and Akhurst (2019) contend that research on creative writing and visual arts grounded in critical race methodologies provides a space in which a decolonised knowledge system becomes possible.

It is clear from the Australian-based studies discussed above that most critical race theorists recommend further studies which investigate pedagogical practices which seek to dismantle institutionalised racism and race hierarchies so as to open spaces which embrace the inclusion of minoritised groups, recognising them as legitimate students and learners.

In the next section, the focus is on discussions on the relevance of CRT in South African education contexts.

2.8 CRITICAL RACE BASED RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION CONTEXTS

Although the relevance of CRT can be discussed in broad terms, scholarly work recommends a strong South African framing and requires an appreciation that the

present day social, political and economic imperatives results from the country's colonial history (Le Roux 2016). Apartheid regime takes a bigger space in the colonial history of the country; hence most of the historical references will be made to it to show that CRT frameworks are relevant in South African educational studies.

During the colonial times, South Africa was conceptualised as a white man's country (Adonis and Silinda 2021). The ultimate goal of the colonialist (both British and Afrikaner) was the maintenance of hegemonic white power and exploitation of the black majority for the benefit of the whites. The use of CRT in South Africa derives its impetus from both structural legacies (such as socio-economic ones) and conflict at interpersonal levels as evidenced by countless incidents at South African universities (Conrad 2016; Le Roux 2016). It is important to note, as observed by scholars such as Conradie (2016) and Soudien (2010: 892), that the end of apartheid has thrust South Africa into a lot of uncertainties on how to work effectively toward achieving an equitable society.

While the attainment of democracy in 1994 has granted black majority political freedom, structural inequalities and injustices are still barriers which block their emancipation and empowerment (Conradie 2016; Le Roux 2016). Such a situation is best understood when the readership appreciates that CRT challenges ahistoricism and can be used as an analytical tool to interrogate injustices which mar higher education institutions despite efforts to decolonise and transform them. Thus to get a better understanding of background to the inequalities and injustices which mar South African society, a brief overview of that background is imperative. South Africa remains deeply rooted in the histories of oppression and privilege (Le Roux 2016:2). Such scenarios sync with the maintenance of whiteness and privilege as theorised by CRT American scholars as discussed in sections above.

The intellectual property possessed by the white American is not unique to US contexts. The former oppressive American judicial and education systems can be juxtaposed to formerly colonised states such as South Africa. In the later contexts, both colonial and apartheid authorities relied on the Western and Eurocentric knowledge and scientific theories to justify racism. As an example, the historically

white Afrikaans universities provided ideological underpinnings which promoted oppressive racist system (Le Roux 2016). English medium universities also enjoyed white privileges and rights. Thus from a historical perspective, the use of CRT analysis in South Africa based studies remains current and relevant. This study focuses on the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

A parallel can be drawn between the racial inequalities in US, which prompted CRT scholars and the inequalities experienced in contemporary South Africa. I therefore argue that CRT is a relevant tool of analysis in exploring issues of race, inequalities and systematic violence experienced in South Africa higher education.

I am convinced that an appreciation of the permanence of racism in South African society in general and epistemic racism in its learning institutions in particular will help to reflect the realistic perspective of the structure of South African society (Le Roux 2016). For example, as a country characterised by institutional racism, economic apartheid is a possible outcome in institutions such as the universities in which English medium instruction reinforces educational access inequalities (Heleta 2018; Le Roux 2016; Spaull 2013). CRT perspectives on contemporary South Africa show the permanence of racism and that the racial ideology of apartheid served as a road map towards whiteness as treasured property (Harris 1993; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). In my study, I consider whiteness as referring to the ideology of white supremacy which works through discourses even in contexts which are currently politically independent (Delgado and Stefancic 2017; Fylkesnes 2018). Thus CRT as an analytical tool in academia enables researchers to interrogate whiteness, inequality, inequity and social injustices in South African society. Critical think-tanks may also come to the realisation that although the country has a progressive national constitution which promulgates a non-racism and non-sexism (RSA1996), racism and/or coloniality are still endemic in the country. Thus the permanence of race is expressed in the presence of coloniality in the education system. I argue that in studies which centre on epistemic injustices, racialised systems and the binary of privilege and poverty, CRT analytical approaches could be used to address such issues.

2.9 SUMMARY

This chapter provides the conceptual and theoretical frameworks on which the study is underpinned. Concepts such as colonisation of higher education, coloniality in higher education, curriculum transformation and Africanisation of curriculum were discussed in order to show how they inter-relate and to show how they are linked to the decolonisation of university curriculum. Bell's (1980) interest convergence principle and Ladson-Billing and Tate's (1995) CRT theory have been explicated as theoretical lens through which the data gathered in this study were analysed. The relevance of the theory in education with particular reference to the South African context has been discussed. The next chapter is centred on the review of related literature.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed both the conceptual and theoretical frameworks on which the present study is underpinned. This chapter is centred on reviewed literature on the decolonisation of higher education curricula. To shape an understanding of the current contentious topic about the decolonisation of higher education curricula, some recent studies on various university settings have been reviewed based on the first research question for this study namely: How is the concept of decolonisation of university curriculum addressed in literature? This is one of the sub questions which sought to provide answers to the main research question for the study, namely; What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?

Since my study is based in the South African postcolonial context, I chose to review literature which deals with universities in postcolonial contexts. In this chapter not all postcolonial universities were considered for discussion. The literature selected for discussion in this chapter comprises of studies from the UK, Canada, New Zealand, Latin America and Africa. The context of these countries provided a broader historical context for the study. Thus, a funnel approach was used for the literature review. Studies based on the UK were considered relevant to this study as the country experienced student protest movements which called for decolonisation of curricula (Bhambra et al. 2018). The chapter also provided a review on the higher education transformation trajectory in South African since 1994.

3.2 AN OVERVIEW OF DECOLONISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

The studies reviewed in this section were based in the UK, Canada, New Zealand, and Latin American contexts because the debates on decolonisation of higher education are topical in these countries. Furthermore the reviewed literature from

these countries assisted me to link the South African higher education context with broader issues in higher education internationally. South Asian countries such as India were former colonies; however, my search for relevant sources located outdated articles which were not suitable for this study. Nonetheless, studies reviewed provided a broader historical context which shows developments in the discourse of decolonisation of university curricula.

3.2.1 Decolonisation of the curriculum in British and Canadian universities

Towards the end of 2017, Cambridge University's undergraduate students called for the decolonisation of their English Literature degree (Bhabra, Gebrial and Nişancioğlu 2018; Harris, Race, Chetty, Riaz and Lebbie 2020). During these protests undergraduate students demanded: a) a broader curriculum which included non-white male authors; and b) the inclusion of literature from the Global South in the English Literature Programme. Morreira, Luckett, Kumalo and Ramgotra (2020) and Sultana (2019) identify similarities between the demands of these students and the South African campaign, HashTagRhodesMustFall, in 2015. Not only did students protests in South Africa demand the removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, a symbol of white supremacy and institutional racism, but also the decolonisation of the university curriculum. This also took place at Oxford University (Gopal 2019). A similar campaign at University College in London called "Why is my curriculum white?" demanded the inclusion of non-white female scholars across disciplines and writers from former colonised countries (Andrews 2019; Bhabra et al. 2018; Bird and Pitman 2019; Cupples and Grosfoguel 2019).

In Britain, the calls for the decolonisation of the university curriculum were firstly driven by internationalisation of universities (El Magd 2016; Hubble and Bolton 2018). Internationalisation of universities entails the mobility and mutual influence of higher education systems to promote teaching, learning, knowledge transfer, cooperation and competition (Teichler 2007). Consequently, universities reshape their curricula to promote global citizenship for students, academics and other stakeholders through increased understanding of diverse cultures, knowledge production and dissemination (Du Preez 2018). There is a strong relationship between internationalisation and

decolonisation because internationalisation deals with mobility of staff and academics among various international universities which results in multicultural and multilingual contact of people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Decolonisation seeks to include multiculturalism and multilingualism in the university curricula. I am of the opinion that for internationalisation to be meaningfully realised, it should start with the decolonisation of the self, given diverse backgrounds of students, academics and staff in general. In the UK university students were inspired by the decolonisation campaigns in other parts of the world (Bhambra et al. 2018: 6; Gopal 2017). As a result, they organised themselves into protest movements which interrogated the whiteness of the curriculum and dominance of Eurocentric knowledge systems (Andrews 2018; Bhambra et al. 2018; Bird and Pitman 2019; Donnelly and Evans 2018). According to Bakewell (2018) and Morreira et al. (2020), university students in the UK protested against the whiteness of the curriculum. As a result of the HashTagRhodesMustFall protest movements in South African universities and the Rhodes Must Fall Oxford campaigns, a curriculum decolonisation initiative was started at University of Birmingham. As a result a Curriculum Away Day was organised in November 2018 to discuss curriculum decolonisation, which was facilitated by Meera Sabaratnam, from the University of London (Gerasmos 2020). This event was attended by thirty colleagues from the School of Government at the University of Birmingham. The focus of their discussions was pedagogical approaches which could enable them in decolonising institutional curricula. Apart from the student protest movements as discussed above, students expressed their demand for decolonisation of curricula at various universities in the UK through student unions. These student unions included students from the University of Cambridge, University of Oxford, University of the Arts, London, University of Kent, Queen Mary University of London, Keele University, University of Leeds and Goldsmith University (Charles 2019). I argue that these protests revealed students' awareness of the goals of the hidden curriculum, which is to prepare them to be new servants of capitalism through its autocratic values and attitudes (Morreira et al. 2020:1).

Bird and Pitman (2019) conducted a study to determine issues of representation and decolonisation within the UK higher education system. They explored the authorship on the reading lists of two modules, Science and Social Science, to ascertain

representation of diverse scholarly communities. The findings revealed that Science had a lower proportion of female authors than Social Science and very few authors were from the Global South. In this study, I use the term Global South to refer to nations which need liberation from Western rhetoric centred on the myth that the Western knowledge system is the objective truth (Mignolo 2011; Manathunga 2020). I also use the term Global North to refer to the former coloniser nations which consider Western epistemologies as the only universal knowledges which cannot be challenged. According to Bird and Pitman (2019), the university reading lists in the UK are mainly Eurocentric and dominated by male white academics. They therefore, recommend a need for wider consultation with the student body, staff and other stakeholders to meet the decolonial agenda of including authors from Global South in reading lists and rethinking the curriculum offered in the university settings across the globe (Blackburn 2017; Colgan 2017; Heleta 2016; Sleeter 2017; Sumner 2018).

The above discussion indicates that in the context of UK universities, decolonisation is understood by the students as the adaptation of the university curricula to better prepare graduates for both the present and the future. This will address sustainable development and re-orient the purpose of higher education for the common good (Padayachee et al. 2018: 290). This is mainly because universities are expected to play a major role in addressing social injustices and shaping the future (UNESCO 2017; Maringe and Ojo 2017). Because curriculum reform is a need voiced by students, further studies which capture how students perceive decolonisation of university curriculum remain current and relevant.

A study conducted by Almeida and Kumalo (2018) within the Canadian higher education system revealed that Canadian academic spaces remain largely unchanged, yet continue to stand as evidence that decolonisation is under way. Using the critical race lenses, Almeida and Kumalo (2018) drew from their own familiarity, interactions and complicity with power in academia. They conclude that the discourse of decolonisation in Canadian universities reinforces the superiority and maintenance of white, Western ways of knowing, thinking and being. Notwithstanding the contribution made by Almeida and Kumalo (2018) concerning the relevance of engaging with the historical background of the Canadian academy, I seek to highlight

some methodological issues in their research. They could have elicited data from other staff members to enrich their findings.

Similarly, Louie, Pratt, Hanson and Ottmann (2017) used an illustrative case study to show that the history of the Canadian academy is dominated by the Global North epistemologies. These Western epistemologies have resulted in the devaluation of the indigenous knowledges (Almeida and Kumalo 2018; Louie et al. 2017; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015). Thus, with its historic roots in Anglo-European Enlightenment, the modern university in Canada is an image of Western institutions whose key role is to spread an empire in which the scientific study of culture and identity of the indigenous people remains colonised in the absence of decolonisation (Louie et al. 2017: 17). Their case study examines the ongoing work to indigenise education programmes at their workplace in a Canadian university. Their study documents effective decolonial pedagogical practices they use in their teaching. Louie et al. (2017) use their collective experiences as indigenous faculty members to promote decolonial pedagogical practices which enhance strategies such as remembering, claiming, connecting and storytelling in their teaching. Professor Louie uses the technique of negotiating while Professors Pratt and Hanson adopt storytelling as an indigenous method of teaching. In the classroom, Professor Ottmann employs remembering, claiming and connecting as teaching tools. Remembering is used as to connect to students' lived experiences; claiming refers to voicing what should belong in pedagogical content; and connecting refers to the coming together of these relations.

The methods used by the four academics outlined in the preceding paragraph are relevant to the decolonial methods proposed by Chilisa (2012) and Smith (2012). Remembering is painful because it involves memories of how the othered people in today's classroom reveal what being dehumanised does to their cultures (Smith 2012). This approach results in healing and transformation which in turn facilitates engagement with all other parties in the classroom situation (Louie et al. 2017; Smith 2012). The use of negotiating as a decolonising principle involves recognising and working towards long term goals which seamlessly brings all students together despite their diverse ethnic-cultural orientations (Kimmermer 2012; Smith 2012). Through the

strategy of negotiating, academics provide students with extensive feedback without a final grade; finally, students are accorded an opportunity to negotiate the merits of their submission.

I applaud the strategy of negotiation between academics and students as a teaching tool in as far as it disrupts the myth of old canons of knowledge which depicts teachers as sole knowers in the classroom. I advance that decolonising methodologies used by Louie et al. (2017) in their study overlap and seek to promote social justice in teaching. The methods are relevant in situations where there is meaningful engagement in decolonising or transforming higher education curricula which are inherently marred by coloniality. I also argue in favour of the calls of Jackson (2016), Martinez- Vargas (2020) and Nyamnjoh (2016) for collegiality and global unity of students and academics within and outside the academy in their endeavours to decolonise teaching and learning meaningfully.

Stein, Andreotti, Hunt and Ahenakew (2019) provide a critical reflection of the efforts to address the impact of Canada's colonial history on indigenous people. Also central to their reflection is the role of Canadian higher education in transforming universities in the postcolonial era. According to Stein et al. (2019), there is a national discourse on reconciliation within Canadian society. Such a discourse represents a moment in which the Canadian colonial settlers and the higher education institutions they created are forced to adjust their practice due to decolonial demands (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018; Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015; Stein et al. 2019; Universities of Canada 2015). By implication, the discourse of the decolonisation of Canadian institutions, similar to those of German higher education, appears to be patronising (Kindiki, Mollendorf, Speck and Webb 2019). It further implies that the discourses of decolonising higher education in Canada mitigate against creating spaces which accommodate critical dialogue on issues of power and social justice (Almeida and Kumalo 2018; Kindiki et al. 2019).

A different scenario in Canada demonstrates the strides towards decolonising higher education. At the University of Victoria, the decolonisation process is evident in the *First Peoples' House* which is built at the centre of the university's main campus (Pratt,

Louie, Hanson and Ottman 2018). The First Peoples' House is jointly managed by indigenous community leaders, faculty and staff. Indigenous academic programmes in law, social work, education, counselling, humanities and linguistics are offered.

The discussion thus far about decolonisation in Canada provides evidence of structural adjustments in university contexts. I opine that such adjustments are relevant preparatory avenues which, if developed with all stakeholders with the same goal, may eventually lead to the decolonisation of the higher education system.

The next subsection focuses on decolonisation studies conducted in New Zealand.

3.2.2 Decolonising Higher Education in New Zealand

This section deals with studies based on the New Zealand higher education system. While the preceding discussion shows that decolonial efforts in Canadian settings are largely superficial, New Zealand based studies reveal that the degree to which decolonial practices are operationalised depends on the programme delivery within higher education institutions (McNabb 2019). The decolonising programmes delivered in New Zealand higher education are committed to decolonial approaches. However, the challenge in the implementation of such programmes is that educators struggle to operationalise their commitment and to maintain the momentum (McNabb 2019). In clarifying the rationale behind operational challenges, scholars assert that there are few Maori indigenous academics to assist with the transformation process (McNabb 2019; Morgan and Hutchings 2017).

The Maori people are the New Zealand and Australian Aborigines whose culture is known as Maori (McNabb 2019; Manathunga 2020; Morehu 2018; Smith 2012). Their culture was threatened by the occupation of their lands by white settlers who were known as Pakeha in the late 1700s. In 1840, the British Crown representatives signed the Treaty of Waitangi with the Maori chief resulting in the permeation of white culture into Maori culture. Maori culture prioritises maintenance of Maori identity and language in all domains of life of the Maori people (Khalifa, Khalil, Marsh and Halloran 2018; Mahabeer 2020; Smith and Smith 2018). Thus, within the Maori context in New

Zealand, the Maori people have persistently constructed their own transformative philosophies and strategies (Amundsen 2019; Mahabeer 2020; Manathunga 2020). Such strategies and philosophies help to promote indigenous Maori ways in domains such as education at all levels (Gjerpe 2018; Pihama 2016; Rowe-Williams 2018; Smith and Smith 2018). It is against this background that some reviewed studies on decolonising higher education in New Zealand should be understood.

Maori academic staff in Social Work Education at a university in New Zealand have provided a decolonised curriculum by blending the Maori knowledges in their teaching (Orange, Calman and Parkin 2017). Although New Zealand decolonial researchers applaud that Maori cultural identities are highly valued in pedagogical practices in the country's universities, there is a strong sense that more could be done to accommodate and support students' learning needs (Amundsen 2019; De Sousa Santos 2018; Manathunga 2018).

In a different study, Geldud and Sathorar (2016) assert that the process of engaging and leading university educators in the process of curriculum reform is difficult. Longhurst and Jones (2018) corroborate the assertion. They advance that curriculum reform in New Zealand universities is characterised by intellectual debates, fear, resistance and challenges (Jones 2018:269). Longhurst and Jones (2018) examined the Curriculum Enhancement Programme offered to students at the University of Waikato in New Zealand using an auto-ethnographic approach. This programme was intended for undergraduate students at all levels and was driven by a new Curriculum Design Framework. The programme proposed that all undergraduate degrees should consist of three components: disciplinary foundations, cultural perspectives and industry, employment and community engagement. The programme started with a week of orientation for all first year students to help them transition into the university set up. The programme made it mandatory for final year students to be assessed in the third week of the first semester. These assessments were conducted to identify students' needs earlier and address them to facilitate academic success. Selected academics were identified to carry out material revision where necessary. Finally, the programme designers created multiple communication strategies for all stakeholders including students and academics. These multiple communication strategies included

emails, meetings and media columns in the university and community publications for people to engage in the programme (Longhurst and Jones 2018).

The study findings revealed that curriculum reform at the institution was a chaotic journey characterised by fear and resistance from those who felt pressured by it. Similarities can be drawn between Louie et al.'s (2017) Canadian based study and Longhurst and Jones's (2018) New Zealand based study. Both studies employed critical engagement which accorded both students and academics opportunities to autonomously engage in interrogating curriculum issues for the common good to effect decolonial transformation aimed at promotion of social justice.

The literature reviewed on New Zealand's decolonisation of higher education is mainly on how academics infuse decolonised methodologies in their teaching. Decolonising pedagogical practices in the country seek to accommodate the Maori students and academics. To some recognisable extent, there is evidence of fruitful implementation of a decolonial curriculum and designing and delivering the curriculum content. However, the decolonisation debates and engagement in New Zealand are also characterised by fear, resistance and challenges (Amundsen 2019; De Santos 2018; Manathunga 2018; 2020).

In the next section I discuss literature related to decolonisation and/or transformation of university curricula in Latin America.

3.2.3 Decolonisation of curriculum in Latin America

The Latin American decolonial thinking is premised on the notion of decoloniality of knowledge which asserts that socio political domination of Latin America and other Global South countries is directly aligned with the imposition and reproduction of Western epistemologies (Grosfoguel 2013; Mignolo 2011; Quijano 2000). Guzman-Valenzuela (2021) asserts that the topic of decolonisation in Latin American higher education has been under-investigated. In order to address the challenges of coloniality in the Latin American universities, Guzman-Valenzuela (2021) proposes epistemological, cultural, economic and ideological practices. Those practices

facilitate critical border line thinking which results in new ways of knowledge production. The concern for epistemological and ideological emancipation from Western knowledges warns that Western knowledges in Latin America's higher education put the ontology of academic knowledge at stake. Thus, there is a dire need to consider other ways of knowledge construction and dissemination as a means to interrogate the legitimacy of Western epistemological hegemony.

In a research article, Chiappa and Rebeca (2021) analysed two international scholarship programmes. The results revealed that the concept of internationalisation, which was one of the core aims of the programmes, was aligned to academic mobility to the Global North countries. The authors (2021) argue that such programmes implicitly promote the role of a colonial legacy which should be dismantled. Thus, there is need for the decolonisation of internationalisation of higher education because, as expressed by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2021) the present internationalisation of higher education in Global South promotes the hierarchical knowledge and knowledge production of the West.

Similarly, Tyson and Vega (2019) affirm that universities in Latin America were designed to facilitate European education values. Eurocentric education systems in most of Latin America are a legacy of the Spanish colonial system which sought to elevate Spanish values as superior to indigenous ways of thinking of Latin Americans (Mato 2016). Tyson and Vega (2019) further confirm that educational policies and practices in Latin America resonate with those of the Global North. Eurocentric values are dominant in the Latin American university context as is the case in other Global South locations, also in South Africa. I concur with Martinez- Vegas (2020: 14) and Guzman-Valenzuela (2021) that it is important to engage in border line thinking which eventually allows epistemological, culturally relevant pedagogical approaches which embrace diversity in knowledge production since education systems around the world are not homogeneous.

In the next section, empirical studies on decolonisation of higher education in some parts of Africa are discussed.

3.3 DECOLONISING HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOME PARTS OF AFRICA

In this section, I further situate my study by reviewing literature dealing with African university contexts in general. A review of studies conducted in all postcolonial African universities was beyond the scope of this study.

In African contexts, advocates of decolonisation research such as Heleta (2018), WaThiongo (1994), Nyoni (2019), Mbembe (2017) and Stein and Andreotti (2016) are of the opinion that the research agenda on the curriculum and the received Western oriented knowledge frameworks used in African education systems require re-examination and critique. In re-examining the African education curricula, the primary focus should be the inclusion of indigenous ideas, thus, eradicating the myth that indigenous knowledges cannot form part of the education curricula (Heleta 2018; Ngugi 2004; Nyoni 2019; Mbembe 2017; Stein and Andreotti 2016). In their study, Stein and Andreotti (2016) identify myths entrenched in Western knowledge systems. An example is the myth that indigenous knowledge of the marginalised groups cannot be fitted into any of the ways of Western knowing. I opine that such belief systems need to be deconstructed as a step towards embracing diversity in the knowledge systems of the world.

Within the Ethiopian education context, Rose, Downing, Asare and Mitchell (2019) warn that curriculum reform is inhibited by an implementation disjuncture between government policies and the university teacher's ability to operationalise these policies. Their idea is supported by Gyamera and Burke's (2018) study which critiques the prevalence of Western paradigms in African universities. In a similar study, Ndofirepi and Gwavaranda (2018) lambast exclusive Western knowledge systems in most African universities.

Scholars such as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2016) and Gukurume and Maringire (2020) assert that Zimbabwean academics are British at heart; thus the higher education curricula in the country are in dire need of decolonisation. I concur with Hendricks (2018), Gukurume and Maringire (2020) and Morreira, Taru and Truys (2020) that many African universities are rigged spaces: they are physically in Africa but they are

refashioned in the image of Western universities as they were created by the various colonial powers. However, the dominance of colonial Western hegemony in African universities is rejected by Onwuzuruigbo's (2018) study conducted in Nigeria. His study reveals the rejection of Eurocentric knowledge production amongst African scholars and students due to its tendency to undermine the local knowledge systems.

According to Garuba (2015), the decolonisation of the Kenyan higher education system reveals a need to provide answers to questions which focus on the place, perspectives and orientations before attempting to implement curriculum decolonisation. Through answering such questions one will appreciate that Kenya, East Africa, or Africa in general should be the epicentre of the African university curriculum (Chilisa 2012; Garuba 2015; Fomunyan 2019; WaThiongo 1994). In a study conducted in the Republic of Cameroon, Ashu (2020) asserts that Cameroonian universities remain largely Western and unchallenged. Thus, the curriculum taught in Cameroonian universities does not reflect the realities of the country. In Cameroon, globalisation perpetuates inequalities in accessing higher education. Thus, there is need to establish a decolonised curriculum in Cameroonian universities by indigenising the content and curricula delivery modes.

Research in Ghana's higher education system indicates that, despite attainment of political independence in 1966, inequalities exist in the language of instruction and the curriculum dominated by Western knowledge systems (Gyamera 2015; Owusu 2020). In resolving coloniality challenges, Owusu (2020) proposes that Ghana work in collaboration with other African countries to decolonise its university curriculum effectively.

Accordingly, Ndlovu (2018) used a decolonial perspective to interrogate the possibility of a different future for the African people whose ways of knowing are subject to colonial models of the world. His study evaluates the Pan African University (PAU) initiative introduced in Addis Ababa. The African heads of states called for the revitalisation of African universities through the Declaration of the African Union (African Union 2007). Thus in 2011, PAU was officially launched (Ndlovu 2018). The PAU institutes were established within existing universities in different regions in the

African continent. These institutes are as follows: Water, Energy and Climate Change in Algeria, Life and Earth Science at University of Ibadan in Nigeria, Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Humanities, Social Sciences and Good Governance at the University of Younde.`

Ndlovu (2018:96) claims that coloniality has two roles in the mind of the colonised subalterns: the prescriptive role and the performative role in the maintenance of implicit structures of colonialism in politically independent contexts. The prescriptive role seeks to reject forms of change meant to disrupt the status quo. The performative role deals with the power structure of coloniality which accepts transformation and rearrangement but which do not to lead to the collapse of coloniality matrix (Chilisa 2012; 2017; Mignolo 2009, Grosfoguel 2007). The two roles are interwoven. In her seminal work, Sahlins (2013) argues that a prescriptive structure assimilates contingent circumstances into itself, thus resisting change, while a performative one assimilates itself to contingent circumstances hence becomes susceptible to change or reshuffle. This implies that the systems of coloniality resist change which will lead to the decolonisation of institutional cultures and hierarchies (Ndlovu 2018). In African context, Sahlins's (2013) conceptualisation of coloniality can be understood as a power structure which negates Africans as agents in determining their own future. It is a vertical global power structure in which some people enjoy privileges in a Western oriented modernity while others suffer the consequences of being relegated to the periphery (Ndlovu 2018; Mignolo 2009). Grosfoguel (2007) and Maldonado-Torres (2007: 243) argue that people who suffer due to the power structures experience colonialism, apartheid and neocolonialism, resulting in the continual survival of coloniality beyond political independence.

An analysis of Ndlovu's (2018) reveals his skepticism of the former colonised people's abilities to erase or diminish coloniality. He doubts the colonised people's abilities to apply their own knowledge systems as points of departure in their pedagogical practices. Thus, I detect a pessimistic attitude in his arguments. I am of the opinion that it is possible for the colonised to reject coloniality even in the face of implementation challenges (Nyoni 2019; Shawa 2019; Waghid 2019). This is due to

the fact that the process of colonisation entailed the renaming of things in order to erase memory of how things initially were (Chilisa 2017; Mudimbe 2017). An example is the name changes that many African children endured at the start of their schooling career (Shava and Manyike 2018: 40). This was a means of fast tracking the memory lost by many children. With these name changes came new religious practices which were out of sync with cultural religious practices (Goduka and Chilisa 2016; Shava and Manyike 2018). African children's ways of learning which are mainly through entrepreneurship also changed as the mode of teaching was predominantly lecturing and repetition. Thus, the schooling of most of these academics included indoctrination practices that resulted in memory loss and identity struggle (Shava and Manyike 2018: 40). Despite all these challenges I maintain that it is possible for the African minds to be decolonised.

3.3.1 Decolonisation in South African higher education contexts

The typically colonial university curriculum in South Africa has sparked debate about what universities teach and the relevance of such curricula to the present day students (Heleta 2018; Jansen 2017; Nyoni 2019; Shawa 2019; Sayed, Motala and Hoffman 2017). These debates were spurred by the 2015/16 student protest movement which started at the University of Cape Town's as#Rhodesmustfall campaign (Bhambra et al. 2018; Mamdani 2018; Mathebula 2019; Manathunga 2020; Trowler 2018). The protests spread across the country with University of Witswatersrand as the epicentre (Chaka et al. 2017; Mathebula 2019). It is therefore, important to explore studies subsequently conducted on the decolonial agenda at South African higher education institutions. Sayed et al. (2017) conducted a meta-analysis of teacher education curricula and conducted interviews with teacher education lecturers at five South African universities. They examined the kinds of intellectual debates to which student teachers are exposed, teacher educators' understanding of factors underlying curriculum decisions and the broader institutional and policy dynamics which impact on the efforts to rethink curricula. The results indicated that in the sample of five South African universities, student teachers received limited exposure to multiple ways of understanding Africa and its complex education histories. Findings pointed to the complexities of the decolonisation of curriculum, which involves a) the struggle with

self as an academic; b) coming to terms with the brokenness of the African knowledge; and c) the cultivation of epistemic tentativeness, humility and courage (Sayed et al. 2017).

These findings corroborate Naidoo's (2016) claim that lecturers face challenges while engaging in a decolonisation discourse of university curriculum. Naidoo's (2016) results reveal that academics are engaged in understanding their students' demands which compromise their teaching. Furthermore, these academics are expected to be able to negotiate institutional imperatives and circumstances. Jansen (2017) claims that, although the study is relevant, what is expected of lecturers is to rethink of their understanding of curricula.

A case study exploring the engineering sector at a university in South Africa indicated that theory, practice, language, and pedagogy are areas which require decolonisation (Fomunyam 2017). The findings further revealed that teaching and learning within the institution failed to enhance decolonisation. Consequently, the creation of contextual relevance could enhance curriculum transformation at the institution. The study recommends a need to interrogate the language of instruction, teaching and learning in order to enhance the training of future engineers. Thus, decolonisation also deals with the inclusion of indigenous languages as media of instruction. Another recommendation made is the need for further research on what should be decolonised (Fomunyam 2017).

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that scholars view the decolonisation discourses from different viewpoints. Sayed et al. (2017) and Fomunyam (2017) understand it from the vantage point of those who teach. I opine that these different vantage points are significant in challenging curriculum stakeholders to deepen their thinking of curriculum matters such as decolonisation.

As a follow-up on the complexity of the decolonisation process, Fanon (1962), Tuck and Yang (2018) and WaThiongo (1994) argue that the first step in the decolonisation discourse is the decolonisation of the mind. It is therefore, imperative for all stakeholders to be conscientised, to enable them to critique their minds in relation to

their identities and the epistemologies of former colonisers. The ability to uncage or disentangle mental slavery is a progressive move towards becoming decolonised at a personal level (Chaka et al. 2017; Fomunyam 2017; Grosfoguel 2007; Nyoni 2019). As knowledge is embedded in language and culture, it is logical that for the African mind to be decolonised, the language of engagement should be changed (WaThiongo 1994). Those who subscribe to Wa Thiongo's (1994) perspective support the use of indigenous languages as medium of instruction as a step towards the realisation of decolonisation. However, in the wake of calls to decolonise the university curriculum in the student protests of 2015/6, some South African universities have adopted English medium policies (Mahabeer 2018; Munyaradzi 2019; Nyoni 2019). Thus, from Wa Thiongo's perspective, this shift highlights that effective centring of African epistemologies remains rhetoric. It remains an ideal while the African languages remain on the periphery. The implication is that African knowledge systems remain undervalued. Undervaluing African knowledge presents a landscape which triggers more debate on the decolonisation discourse.

Voster and Quinn (2017) examined a constellation of new discourses related to the decolonisation of universities in South Africa. Their study further aimed at critiquing academic developers' practices and exploring implications of a decolonial turn for academic developers in the two decades after democracy in South African universities through critical and social realism lenses. Academic developers are the academics who design curriculum content and various other course programmes both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the academy (Almeida and Kumalo 2018; Quinn 2019). In their critical examination, Voster and Quinn (2017) argue that although the enrolments at higher education institutions increased since 1994 and improvements in staff demographics are noticeable, curriculum changes envisioned in the National Qualification Framework did not come to fruition. These authors aver to the continuing structural imbalances within institutions which are largely inherited from the colonial and apartheid regime. The study also reveals that the academic staff, especially at historically white institutions, was schooled from a Westernised epistemological orientation in their pedagogical practices. Because of that privilege, such academics do not feel the urge to change the structural and cultural conditions of these universities. Such observations were also articulated by decolonial scholars

such as Mignolo (2009; 2011), Maldonado- Torres (2007), Grosfoguel (2007) and Jansen (2017) in his book *As by fire: The end of the South African university*. In this book Jansen (2017) conducts a comprehensive analysis on the reflections of eleven vice chancellors from different South African universities on the 2015-2016 student protest movements. Jansen (2017) interrogates the appropriateness of decolonising the university in a political context which he views as having emerged from colonialism more than a century ago. In Jansen's (2017) view, the targeting of the universities as an epicentre of the decolonising project is a scapegoat. According to Jansen (2017), students who advocated for the decolonisation of curriculum are novices in curriculum theory, hence are not best arbiters of the fitness of the curriculum. I however argue that such a critique seems disingenuous. Being novice does not necessarily stop one from seeing what is wrong in the way curriculum is delivered. According to Vandeyar (2019), curriculum involves the student, teacher and the content. There appears to be a failure on Jansen's part to appreciate that university students know what they want from the education system. Furthermore, curriculum could be enhanced from my opinion through the inclusion of students during curriculum development. Thus, I further argue that students are stakeholders who should make an input in the curriculum development process. Although I do not condone the destructive nature of the student protests of 2015- 2016, I am of the opinion that they voiced their concerns and that pushed curriculum researchers to engage in curriculum revision.

The reluctance by Western oriented academics and lecturers to embrace the decolonisation in their practices could be indicative of the complexities which surround the decolonial agenda in African university settings (Ndlovu 2018; Nyoni 2019; Quinn 2019) as well as internationally. Thus, if academics resist decoloniality, implementing a decolonised curriculum will remain a pipe dream. I concur with Ghaddar and Caswell (2019), Voster and Quinn (2017), Mbembe (2015; 2017) and Manathunga(2018), who opine that the discourse of transformation needs to be replaced by stronger discourses of change if the structural and cultural conditions of higher education institutions are to be dismantled

Academics who are also curricula developers in postcolonial university settings are challenged to be critical in their practices (Lockett et al. 2019; Voster and Quinn 2017).

For example, Voster and Quinn (2017) challenge academics to apply the concept of epistemological access in critical ways which allow accommodation of those who are currently “othered” in the existing colonial matrix of power structures. Thus as proposed by Mignolo (2009) and Ghaddar and Caswell (2019) those who teach should ask themselves questions such as: what kind of knowledge should the students access and how should that knowledge be accessed? The implication is that, at an individual level, decolonisation should start with self and the process of decolonisation should change being, transform the spectator initially crushed to a nonessential state to become a privileged actor (Fanon 1962). When this kind of introspection is embraced, then the decolonisers will be in agreement with Aoki’s (1999) seminal work that instead of curricula only focusing on curriculum as planned; it should also be viewed as lived, that is how the curriculum is experienced by teachers and students. I concur with Le Grange (2016) that legitimising the curriculum as lived by students and teachers provides room for students to experience the contemporary university curriculum and to use such experiences as a basis for calling for its decolonisation. A typical example is the 2015-16 students protests which called for decolonisation of the university curriculum in South Africa because these students viewed the university curricula as dominated by Western hegemony which is irrelevant to their contexts and needs.

According to Mendey and Madiope (2020), curriculum transformation in an African context includes the implementation of African pedagogies in line with political, language and historical changes as well as student participation in these changes. Although the use of content analysis is consistent with analysis of qualitative studies, I however argue that from a methodological point of view, the limitations of using secondary sources as the only sources of data in research should not be overlooked. As cautioned by some scholars (Bowen 2009; Gitomer and Crouse 2019; McMillan and Schumacher 2014; O’Leary 2014), secondary data were initially not used to address specific research questions (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). Consequently, I argue that there is likelihood that Mendey and Madiope (2020) have not fully addressed their research questions by merely relying on the secondary data from the various colleges’ implementation reports. I therefore opine that the use of other data collection methods could have yielded more comprehensive information in their study.

Through a postcolonial lens, Heleta's (2016; 2018) research traces the roots of Eurocentricism and epistemic violence in South African universities and suggests possible ways forward. Heleta (2016) reflects on how university students in South Africa have questioned the lack of reforms and the failure of government to take action after more than twenty-six years of democracy. According to Heleta (2016), the dawn of democracy in 1994 did not end the injustices of the past; as a result emancipation of the majority of the people remains a pipe dream. While all South African universities adopted new policies and frameworks, the institutions' cultures and epistemological traditions remain unchanged (Heleta 2016). Hence, McKaiser (2016) and Mbembe's (2016) plea for the need to change the Eurocentric university curricula and teaching methods in the South African context. In an attempt to map the way forward, Heleta (2018) advocates a conscious rejection of values and norms imposed by former colonisers. This view is supported by Garuba (2015) who argues for the decolonisation of higher education institutions. The decolonisation of higher education institutions does not entail exclusion of other Western groups but that all types of knowledge be accommodated in the curriculum especially, the previously marginalized knowledges (Chaka et al. 2017; Zembylas 2018). In a study on decolonising the teacher education curriculum in a South African university, Mahabeer (2018) observes that although there is visible effort to decolonise the education curriculum, fundamental philosophies have not changed. Mahabeer (2018) and Mbembe (2015; 2017) are of the view that attempts of decolonising higher education in South Africa have created new hostilities, conflicts and contradictions. Thus to some extent, the plan to rehabilitate universities is lost.

A desktop review study by Chaka et al. (2017) of 48 undergraduate and postgraduate English studies modules of 24 English Departments at 17 South African higher education institutions in 2017 revealed four major findings namely:

1. Decolonisation is present in only three undergraduate modules and mentioned in only one honours module out of the 48 modules reviewed.
2. Decolonisation is a topical component which is used for analytical purposes in different degrees.

3. Decolonisation is limited to African literature and African writings in the three undergraduate modules.
4. Decolonisation in the honours module is offered as one of the four optional stand-alone modules.

I argue that if only four modules out of 48 deal with decolonisation, the decolonisation agenda is not implemented within South African higher education. I also aver that it is a matter of concern that 44 modules are silent about decolonisation. One would expect a substantial number of modules to include components of decolonisation. The silence on the decolonisation component suggests most academics lack understanding on how to implement decolonisation strategies in their modules. The omission of decoloniality in the 44 modules shows that South African academia is not ready to include other ways of knowing and of being in the curriculum. I am of the opinion that the lack of academic success among the majority of students is an issue which warrants a change in the ways of teaching as well as the content.

According to Williams's (2019) discussion on the decolonisation of university curricula, such discussion should be centred on:

1. Creation of space for open exchanges about colonial knowledge and its legacies;
2. Engaging critically with the language of decolonisation;
3. Grounding discussion of decolonisation in scholarship on the African colonial history.

It appears as though the drivers of the institutional apartheid culture have reservations with the implementation of the decolonised curricula as they regard it as a discourse meant to disempower and disfranchise them (Mudimbe 2017; Nyoni 2019; Shawa 2019; Voster and Quinn 2017). Williams (2019) reveals that former Afrikaans universities mainly focus on the maintenance of social order. This argument is supported by Jansen (2017), who claims that pedagogical practices, the choice of who teaches what and how, were never interrogated but just obeyed.

In another university based study, Ammon's (2019) found that the institution is taking risks in introducing a decolonised curriculum since lecturers are not conversant with the best methods of teaching in a decolonised way. The study concludes that it will take a long time to achieve the decolonial agenda.

In their study, Morreira et al. (2020) argue that there is a gap between decolonial theory and its practices. They further argue that there are multiple ways of implementing decolonial practices in the classroom. Similarly, Gukurume and Maringire (2020) opine for hybridity and plurality in decolonial efforts. Their study examines how Zimbabwean sociologists conceptualise decolonisation. In a similar vein, Mahabeer (2020) explores limits and possibilities for decolonial practice when teachers are trained to teach the state set school curriculum. Her study results reveal the challenges which teachers face in infusing decoloniality in their practices. Hlatshwayo, Shawa and Nxumalo (2020) argue that traditional methods of teaching and learning in higher education use a top-down or hierarchical approach. Such an approach promotes clear power differentiations between students and academics (Morreira et al. 2020). Hlatshwayo et al. (2020) however draw on Lange's (2016) conceptual tool of *ubuntu* in order to voice their call for pedagogical strategies which move away from the top-down approaches to inclusivity. The same pedagogical practices are applauded by Gukurume and Maringire (2020), Morreira et al. (2020), Vandeyar (2019) and Louie et al. (2018).

Dhunpath and Subbaye (2018) conducted a study which examined various reform initiatives designed to enhance student success in higher education since 2004. The findings reveal that despite the efforts made to promote student success, the outcome was minimal. Dhunpath and Subbaye (2018) argue that failure to obtain positive results was largely because higher education systems pathologised student failure. Instead of appreciating language minority students and acknowledging the failure of higher education institutions to accommodate their needs, students are blamed for their failure to assimilate into the dominant culture. Dhunpath and Subbaye (2018) also assert that curriculum reform in South African higher education has failed because of the driving forces behind it, that is, an ideological and political agenda

instead of pedagogical motivations. It is due to such an observable disjuncture that a gap exists.

Luckett, Morreira and Baijnath (2019) conducted a case study with fifteen academic staff from the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Cape Town. The study explored the effects of the 2015-2016 student movement on teaching practices. Their study findings reveal that academics' understanding of the decolonisation process differed. The academics lacked knowledge of the effectiveness of the decolonisation agenda. The study further revealed a lack of institutional support and detailed knowledge of decolonial and curriculum theories necessary to implement the decolonial curriculum. The findings further revealed that academics understand curriculum reform in terms of just the curriculum content. Luckett et al. (2019) argue that it is imperative to understand that normative and social positions of curriculum content have been racialised through whiteness. Their argument is congruent to Luckett and Shay (2017), Baijnath (2017), Sebidi and Morreira (2017) and Badat (2017), who attest that the mainstream curriculum has remained largely untouched since what and how to teach have not been attended to adequately. I argue that under such racialised institutional cultures there is dire need to unpack possible discourses which may promote the 'what' and 'how' of curriculum in pedagogical practices in higher learning institutions. Thus, there is a need for empirical investigations to provide dialogical spaces where radical curriculum and pedagogical decolonisation will be realised (Badat 2017; Luckett et al. 2019).

My reflections on the review of literature in global, African and South African contexts reveal the complex nature of the decolonisation project. Currently debates are underway which illuminate the multi-faceted nature of curriculum conceptualisation, transformation and decolonisation. Various study findings reveal the diversity of positionality of different scholars. In New Zealand and Canadian contexts, there is evidence of several attempts at implementing decolonial methodologies in the classroom. The experiences in British based studies reveal the issue of decolonisation as currently gaining traction especially among students from minority groups. There is no significant evidence from the sources reviewed to indicate implementation attempts to redress the anomaly of a white curriculum being taught to othered white or non-

white students in the UK. The work reviewed on African based studies reflects that the issue of coloniality in universities across the continent has been there for a long time. It is also evident that most academics who are the product of the Western epistemologies are adamant not to unlearn and relearn, therefore it becomes problematic for them to implement decolonial methodologies in the classrooms.

The next section explores the decolonisation which has taken place in South African higher education since 1994.

3.4 THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION DECOLONISATION TRAJECTORY POST 1994

This section explores the higher education transformation processes in South Africa post 1994. The section is divided into subsections which discuss a plethora of policy frameworks which guided transformation in the higher education sector.

In discussing the transformation policy frameworks which guided higher education in South Africa, I am greatly influenced by what Du Preez, Simmonds and Verhoef (2016) observe as three major categories which relate to the overview of their meta-analysis of the history of transformation of higher education in South Africa. The meta-analysis carried out by the authors on journal articles identified the following: transformation through curriculum, transformation through structures, transformation through access, policy and teaching and learning.

The first category looks at the structural discourses which illuminate the transition from apartheid to a democratic nation (Du Preez et al. 2016). This category of education transformation is centred on equality and efficiency of higher education systems. The second category of discourse is closely related to ideological matters as articulated in Department of Education (2008), based on the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education institutions (Du Preez et al. 2016). The third category of transformation discourse centres on epistemology, curriculum, accessibility, equality,

institutional structures and teaching and learning (Du Preez et al. 2016). I used these three categories to structure section 3.4 of this study.

3.4.1 Structural policy frameworks highlighting transition from apartheid to democracy in education

In 1996, the South African National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was tasked by the democratic government to conduct an investigation in higher education and advise government on what needed (Dhunpath and Subbaya 2018; Lange 2017). The commission's report highlights four salient issues: higher education was characterised by inefficiencies and redundancies; due to inefficiency, higher education would not be able to respond to the society's changing needs; higher education did not take into consideration the lack of social justice; and that there was urgent need for radical change in higher education.

The NCHE report to the government resulted in the government devoting itself to policy development which culminated in the drafting of the White Paper 3 (Ramrathan 2016; Tumubweinee and Luescher 2019; Webstock 2016). The NCHE recommended that higher education needed to be reorganised more equitably (Lange 2017). Part of the equitable reorganisation included mergers of the universities which were racially segregated (Kerr and Luescher 2018; Mzangwa 2018; Schendel 2018). In the next subsection, I discuss *White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education*.

3.4.1.1 The White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education

This subsection discusses the *White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education* (DoE 1997), which is a policy framework illuminating the transition from apartheid to a democratic higher education context.

The apartheid policies divided higher education institutions based on race, ethnic and linguistic groups (CHE 2013; HESA 2014). These groupings were allocated different

ideological, social and economic and educational functions in society (HESA 2014: 9; Dhunpath and Subbaye 2018). These differentiated groupings had different conditions regarding knowledge production, curriculum, student access, geographical location, opportunity and quality (Lange 2017; Le Grange 2017). The new democratic government made it its priority to redress these injustices within the higher education institutions (Tewari and liesanmi 2020).

The NCHE was established in February 1995 by the first black South African President, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. The draft White Paper 3 was released in April 1997 after an extensive investigation by the NCHE into the state of higher education institutions in South Africa. The Draft White Paper 3 emphasised the need to conceptualise and plan higher education in South Africa as an integrated single system. It also sought to steer forward the vision to meet national and regional needs in social, cultural and economic development (DoE 1997). The first chapter of the White paper (DoE 1997: 7) outlines the aims of the framework as follows:

1. “To meet the learning needs and aspirations of individuals through the development of their abilities and aptitudes through their lives;
2. To address development needs of society and provide the labour market with the ever changing high level competencies and expertise necessary for the growth and prosperity of a modern economy;
3. To contribute to the socialisation of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens;
4. To contribute to the creation, sharing and evaluation of knowledge through pursuing an engagement of academic scholarship and intellectual inquiry in all fields of human understanding through research, learning and teaching.”

In this study, my focus is to explore the perception of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL in South Africa. Thus, in my review of the White Paper 3, I pose a question: is there evidence of a decolonial agenda in the White Paper?

Scholars such as Webbstock (2016: 22) and Tumubweinee and Luescher (2019:3) appraise White Paper 3 as a policy with the goal to bring about a transformed and democratic higher education system. The upholding of democratic principles seeks to produce independent citizens as well as skilled, socially committed graduates capable of contributing to social and economic development (CHE 2013; HESA 2014). I argue that White Paper 3 fails to address issues of procedures to be followed to address specific curriculum related transformational issues. This critique is also supported by other researchers who claim that there is the dire need for a shift from number counting exercise to curriculum intellectualisation (Badat 2017; Jansen 2017; 2019; Le Grange 2017; Morreira 2017; Ramrathan 2016). Curriculum intellectualisation deals with conceptualisation of curriculum. Hence Ramrathan (2016) invites scholars and other curriculum stakeholders into analysing curriculum related issues in higher education.

Critics of the number counting approach to transforming higher education critique the model as deeply rooted in apartheid ideology: an ideology which they profess, the government of South Africa seeks to radically change (Kumalo 2020; Ramrathan 2016). The challenges associated with this model include low throughput and higher attrition rates. Although several intervention processes were put in place, there continues to be low efficiencies recorded in higher education outputs (Chaka and Govender 2017; Tewari and liesanmi 2020). Another criticism levelled against the transformation of higher education curricula is that it has been largely superficial, only instrumental in promoting national frameworks for qualification and curriculum frameworks which were developed by professional bodies (Jansen 2017; Le Grange 2017; Scott and Ivala 2019).

In my opinion, White Paper 3 is silent in clarifying the implementation processes which higher education institutions should follow to promote effective curriculum transformation. There is need for national frameworks which clearly outline how curriculum transformation should be tackled in higher education institutions.

The following subsection discusses the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE).

3.4.1.2 The National Plan for Higher Education

The NPHE was an implementation framework for the 1997 White Paper 3 (DoE 2001). The NPHE emphasises the commitment to develop a higher education system which supports a culture of human rights through educational programmes and practices conducive for critical discourse, cultural tolerance and non-racism (DoE 2001; Ramrathan 2016; Tumubweinee and Luescher 2019). The NPHE (DoE 2001) made the following recommendations:

- a) The higher education sector should be organised equitably by the merging of racially segregated universities. The merger of previously disadvantaged universities with the white only universities was meant to address the inequality of access and participation challenges (DoE 2001; Dhunpath and Subbaye 2018: 87; Kerr and Luescher 2018; Lange 2017; Mzangwa 2018; Schendel 2018);
- b) The closing of all teacher training colleges, some of which were incorporated with other universities (Tumubweinee and Luescher 2019);
- c) The expansion of the Further Education and Training (FET) sector to provide vocational training. This change brought in differentiation whilst promoting access to higher education to those who were previously disadvantaged by the apartheid system (Hall 2015);
- d) The merger of, some universities, for example Vista University and Technikon South Africa merged with UNISA; Northwest University merged with Potchefstroom University; and Turfloop was merged with Medunsa and renamed the University of Limpopo (Kerr and Luescher 2018; Mzangwa 2018).

Although the mergers were mostly a success, there were some challenges with certain mergers resulting in the reversal of the process. Consequently, Sefako Magkatho Health Science University was de-merged from the University of Limpopo (Tumubweinee and Luescher 2019: 5). Some complex merged institutions such as Tshwane University of Technology and Walter Sisulu are currently experiencing instability. These mergers resulted in the formation of three types of institutions:

universities of technologies, comprehensive universities and traditional universities (Kerr and Luescher 2018; Lange 2017; Mzangwa 2018; Schendel 2018; (CHE 2016; Dhunpath and Subbaya 2018).

Section 2.6 of the NPHE outcome 5 looks at curriculum change and change of enrolments by fields. The following statement (DoE 2001:31) captured from NPHE is relevant in this study. It illuminates that government was aware from the outset that the university curricula lacked the relevance it deserved in a democratic society.

“...important fields of study... which could play an important role in contributing to the development of the African Renaissance continue to be. These include ... fields of study such as African languages and culture, African literature, the transformation of curricula to reflect the location of knowledge and curricula in the context of the African. The Ministry would like to encourage institutions to develop and enhance these fields and will monitor developments closely.”

This quotation is a call for the decolonisation of the South African university curriculum (Tumubweinee and Luescher 2019:7). This quote subscribes to and encourages epistemological and ontological rootedness in the African knowledge systems. However, it fails to spell out the procedures to be followed to achieve the decolonisation results. This lack of specification of the time frames to achieve the decolonial agenda and the prescripts to be used to achieve the results has resulted in a complaint about lack of policy in almost all South African universities.

The next subsection discusses the second category of the transformation framework in South African higher education.

3.4.2 Policy documents related to ideological issues in higher education

This subsection discusses policy frameworks which are centred on the structural discourses. They are as follows: The Transformation and Social Cohesion and Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education (DoE 2008) and The Qualifications Framework Act of 2008 (RSA 2008). These two statutory policy

documents are closely related to ideological matters (Lockett and Morreira 2019; Sebidi and Morreira 2017). A detailed discussion of these two is provided in the section below.

3.4.2.1 The Transformation and Social Cohesion and Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education

The dawn of democracy in 1994 did not end the racial tensions within higher education sector. On the contrary racial tensions were fuelled as previously marginalised students were admitted into previously white only universities. Furthermore, the admission of these students did not result in changes in institutional cultures. Thus, the previously marginalised students were expected to assimilate into the cultures of these institutions of higher learning. The climax of these tensions was the 2008 incident at the University of the Free State (UFS). According to Lange (2017) and Tumubweinee and Luescher (2019), in February 2008, a video made by four young Afrikaans students at UFS went viral and triggered public attention. In the video, black cleaners at the institution were forced to eat food into which one of the students had urinated. As a result the Soudien Commission was instituted in March 2008 to investigate racism within the South African higher education system. This commission was titled by the then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, as the Progress Towards Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education (DoE 2008), which is also known as the Soudien Report because Professor Crain Soudien was the chairperson of the commission.

The overall aim of the commission (DoE 2008) was to investigate and report on:

1. The nature and extent of racism and racial discrimination in public higher education, especially at the university residences;
2. The steps taken by the institutions to combat discrimination;
3. Advice to the Minister of Education and the key constituencies in higher education on policies, strategies and interventions needed to combat discrimination and promote inclusive institutional cultures for staff and

students based on the values and principles enshrined in the national Constitution;

4. Implications for other sectors of the education system.

The Soudien Commission reported on two major issues. The first one is the prevalence of racial and gender based discrimination in institutions of higher learning. The second one is paucity between institutional policies and practices in areas such as teaching, curriculum, learning, language, and governance and residence life. In relation to curriculum and pedagogical issues, the report recommended that a university which cares about the country's future should focus on reviewing the nature of curriculum and its relationship with the broader society. Tumubweinee and Luescher (2019: 6) corroborate findings of the Soudien Commission about the loophole in the White Paper 3, arguing that the policy strategies lacked effectiveness. Other scholars such as Bernstein (2016) and Ndlovu (2019) understand curriculum change through the lens of social justice. As a result, their concern is not centred on what the curriculum is, but how it contributes to the production and reproduction of inequalities among people (Bernstein 2016; Ndlovu 2019). Thus, social justice can only be attained if consumers of the curricula, what is selected as curriculum content and methods of transmitting are related to their cultures (Nyoni and Shawa 2019; Wa Thiongo 1994). Such considerations will result in a curriculum which reflects the experiences and ideologies of the people it is meant for and social justice will be promoted (Fanon 1962; Grosfoguel 2013; Mignolo 2009). Unfortunately, this seems to be an ideal yet to be fully achieved in most higher education institutions in postcolonial Africa including South Africa. This is the gap that this study seeks to explore which is the decolonisation of higher education curriculum.

The next subsection is a discussion on the Qualifications Framework Act of 2008. It is another policy framework which guided transformation in higher education.

3.4.2.2 The Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008

The Qualifications Framework Act came into being as a replacement of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995 (RSA 2008). The SAQA Act

consists of three sub frames and eight level descriptors. However, the Act was amended although the sub frames remain; the levels were increased from 8 to 10 level descriptors. The three sub frameworks are the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications, Higher Education Qualifications and Occupational Qualifications (DHET 2014). The three frameworks are overseen by Umalusi, Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, Council on Higher Education and Quality and Council for Trades and Occupations respectively (DHET 2014). Each of the ten levels has descriptors which illuminate a set of learning and competencies as the students move from one level to another (RSA 2008). Additionally, the descriptors ensure coherence in learning and allow the allocation of qualifications to particular levels with the aim to assess their comparability.

The South African National Qualification Framework is the integration of education and training systems with the following objectives;

1. To create a single integrated national framework for learning achievements;
2. To facilitate access, mobility and progression within education, training and carrier paths;
3. To enhance the quality of education and training;
4. To redress the past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities.

The following subsection is a discussion on the NQF developments in South African higher education.

3.4.2.3 NQF developments in South Africa's higher education

The NQF effectively enhanced the integration of the formerly separate race- based entities in the sector of education and training in the country. Jansen (2017; 2019) argues that the SAQA Act of 1995 brought in a centralised outcomes-based system as the driving force behind the integration that later on sparked contested debates about the impact of NQF. These debates on the NQF resulted in the reviews of the framework resulting in successive curriculum changes between 2002 and 2007 (Lange

2017; Le Grange 2017). These reviews also resulted in the promulgation of the NQF Act of 67 of 2008 and a merger between the two departments: the Department of Education and the Department of Labour into one Department of Education and Labour in 2007. After 2009, more quality assurance developments were made to implement and manage the standards of qualifications. Jansen (2017) and Lange (2017) claim that the NQF's focus was mainly on quality control at the expense of the pedagogical practices. The limitations of NQF are also echoed by Lockett and Morreira (2019) and Baijnath (2017) who lament that since 1994, state policy interventions have focused on improving access and outcomes of the system. I concur that such an improvement was done by use of quality assurance and funding at the expense of examining curriculum related matters.

The NQF Act of 2008 promulgated a progressive structure of high level skills to promote a seamless passage for workers from lowest levels to the top levels (NQF Act 2008). Although the government invested in effecting the NQF, the realisation of low throughput and graduation rates of enrolled university students posed a serious challenge (Badat 2017; Ramrathan 2016). Despite this realisation, investigations into universities curricula were not conducted and causes of these low throughput rates were not investigated (Ramrathan 2016; Sayed et al. 2017). Thus, Jansen (2017) in *The lost scholarship of changing curricula* declares that the knowledge problem was present before the 2015/6 student protests with little intervention. The overall policy choices made by the South African government failed to create the space which accommodates an investigation of knowledge and pedagogy in the higher education curriculum. Lange (2017) challenges South African universities to investigate the relationship between curriculum knowledge and identify.

The next subsection is the third category of the statutory framework documents guiding South African higher education transformation

3.4.3 Transformation frameworks on pedagogy, epistemology and curriculum in teaching and learning

In this section, I discuss the history of transformation frameworks of higher education which are mainly centred on epistemology, curriculum, institutional structures and pedagogy. The Proposal for Undergraduate Reform and the White Paper for Post School Education and Training are the two frameworks discussed.

3.4.3.1 The Proposal for Undergraduate Curriculum Reform in South Africa

The Proposal for Undergraduate Curriculum Reform in South Africa is a report of the task team led by Professor Ian Scott upon request by the Council for Higher Education (CHE) in 2013. The task team was responsible for investigating the current undergraduate curriculum structure as a key element of teaching and learning to consider if there was a need to review and amend it (CHE 2013). CHE (2013) highlighted that the curricula in South African higher education are typically colonial and largely remained unchanged post 1994. The proposal provides a critical analysis of the role of a curriculum structure in place as a systemic tool that adversely affects students' performance due to lack of curriculum time and space for possible reforms (Dhunpath and Subbaye 2018; CHE 2013; Heleta 2018; Mgqwashu 2016). The proposal pronounced that extension of time and curriculum space would provide an opportunity to become more intellectually mature (CHE 2013).

The proposal identified three areas of disjuncture prevalent in the higher education curriculum which need to be addressed to enhance university curriculum namely;

1. articulation gap between schooling and higher education;
2. transitions for which students are differentially prepared;
3. need for the undergraduate curriculum to be enhanced to meet local and global demands (CHE 2013; Dhunpath and Subbaye 2018; Lange 2017).

The proposal further clarified that foundational provisions such as language abilities, academic literacy and expectations of typical twenty-first century graduates would be

absorbed if Bachelor's degrees are extended to four years and professional qualification to five years (Jacobs et al. 2014). Building upon the identified shortfalls in the undergraduate curriculum, the proposal provided some opportunity to reconsider the current curriculum structure in order to erase its conspicuous colonial prescripts (Dhunpath and Subbaye 2018). This proposal was unfortunately rejected by Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in 2015, arguing that the proposal failed to consider the Foundation/Access programmes as chief drivers in transforming the curriculum (Badat 2017; Lockett and Shay 2016; Rawatlal 2018: 295) and costs.

Although the proposal went a long way in addressing challenges of the undergraduate curriculum, it fell short of introducing the needed radical change in the ways in which universities view higher education qualifications in South Africa (Lange 2017; Ramrathan 2016). It is regrettable that the proposal failed to address the issue of whose knowledge is presented in the curriculum and how it is presented. Lockett and Shay (2017) affirm that this lack is a problem in South African higher education. As a result of such a lack, I also identify conspicuous theoretical and empirical gaps (Lockett and Morreira 2019).

3.4.3.2 The White Paper for Post School Education and Training

In this subsection, the White Paper for Post School Education and Training (DHET 2013) is discussed.

The new government administration of 2009 led by former president, Jacob Zuma, brought some changes which resulted in a division of the National Department of Education into the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the DHET (Kgope and Baatjes 2014). Such a policy change should be understood within the dominant global ideology of post school education, which emphasises the ceaseless work of training and retraining, enhancement of credentials and preparation for life (Kgope and Baatjes 2014). The then Minister of Higher Education and Training introduced the White Paper for Post School Education and Training policy framework. This policy framework resulted from the recommendations provided by stakeholders who discussed the

Green Paper for Post School Education and Training in 2012 (DHET 2012). The Minister established a task team lead by John Pampallis, a special adviser to the minister, to investigate challenges faced in post school education and training. Consequently, the South African government administration released the White Paper on Post School Education and Training in January 2014 (Maringe and Osman 2016).

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (DHET 2013) recognises the unfortunate position of African languages in South African higher education. Particularly, it focuses on the closure or the reduction of academics in the Departments of African Languages in almost all the South African universities (DHET 2013). The White Paper provides for African languages to be taught across disciplines at universities. It further recommends that proficiency in an African language be a requirement in professional training. DHET (2013) acknowledges that although there was uneven progress in universities. It thus aimed at ensuring language policy implementation across faculties in all universities (DHET 2013). While this is important in facilitating social cohesion and effective mother tongue based education, the survival of African languages depends on their use as medium of instruction in schools and universities (Munyaradzi 2019). Their use as medium of instruction in these institutions will further enhance their prestige as languages of learning (CHE 2013).

In the following section, I provide some insights into the discourse of neoliberalism, which, to a significant extent, influenced and continues to influence curriculum transformation.

3.5 NEOLIBERAL AGENDA IN TRANSFORMING CURRICULUM

The discourse of transformation in higher education should be read as existing within the neoliberal agenda. Although a full package of neoliberal capitalism is beyond the scope of this study, what I offer here illuminates the role of a neoliberal critique in conceptualising and enforcing neoliberal principles and academic relations through markets based policies. Thus, it is important to provide some insights into neoliberalism.

The neoliberal economic principles were formulated by the Mont Pelerin Society (MPS) which was founded by an Austrian scholar, Friedrich August von Hayek, in 1947 (Giroux 2004; Mignolo 2011; Garcia 2019). Other co-founders of the Society were Frank Knight, Karl Popper, Ludwig von Mises, George Stigler and Milton Friedman (Cornwell 2013; Steger and Roy 2010).

The society subscribes to the freedom of expression, free market economic policies and values of an open society. These principles best summarise the Society's neoliberalism, a term which has to be explicated for better understanding. Seminal works by Giroux and Giroux (2004) explain neoliberalism as the principles which advocate a free market, hence propagating the doctrine of competition and entrepreneurship. Thus, neoliberal thought rejects socialist ideas (Foucault 1991; Steger and Roy 2010). Writing about neoliberal theory, Koopman (2019) professes that Hayek's (1933) economic theory was anchored in the idea of undistorted price mechanisms. These price mechanisms were believed to play the part of synchronising local and personal knowledge without government interruption (Garcia 2019; Koopman 2019). Thus, MPS was unpopular in countries which clung to socialist ideas. On the other hand, countries which subscribed to capitalist ideologies embraced neoliberalism. For example, Chile welcomed neoliberalism in 1973 during President General Augusto Pinochet's tenure in office (Koopman 2019: 53). Such a stance was contrary to the democratic principles used by the preceding government. Countries such as Turkey and Britain, during the time of Margaret Thatcher, post-apartheid South Africa and China shifted to embrace the neoliberal ideas. Under Thatcher's regime, the UK was able to convince the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to embrace a neoliberal agenda (Garcia 2019). In turn, the UK introduced the structural adjustment programmes, which marked the beginning of the global turn towards the deregulation of markets for comparative advantage in international trade (Grosfoguel 2013; Mignolo 2014). The deregulation of markets resulted in China emerging an industrialised country (Koopman 2019; Steger and Roy 2010).

Neoliberalism entails sets of logics which inform the relationship which exists between pedagogical practices and market based policies (Mignolo 2002; 2014, Garcia 2019; Quijano 2000). The relationship has hegemonic mechanisms which foster hierarchies

and authorities of knowledge (Garcia 2019; Grosfoguel 2013; Mignolo 2011). Unfortunately, the enforcement of hierarchies has detrimental effects to those who are 'othered', thus the knowledge of the othered people is relegated as non-legitimate (Garcia 2019; Koopman 2019). Having noted this, Schworer (2018) claims that since its inception, the academy has been closely tied to imperial interests, shaping the criteria of what constitutes legitimate academic knowledge and who is expected to produce it (Lange 2017; Morreira and Baijnath 2019). As a result, higher education institutions become sites of neoliberal trends. Thus in my opinion neoliberalism is a global hegemonic mechanism which functions through the academy to create and promote hierarchies, power structures which dictate upon whose knowledge is legitimate. As such, universities are challenged to respond to the demands of global capitalism within a neoliberal context (Lockett et al. 2019). I see it as a challenge for universities in that the neoliberal national agenda has a direct influence in domains such as education so the need to eliminate the remnants of colonialism and apartheid is occluded.

My study aims to explore the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. What is particularly interesting is that the South African higher education context is intricately entangled in the neoliberal agenda. My study is situated in a South African context which is faced, to some extent, with the old deficit model of curriculum.

3.6 CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORKS FOR SELECTED SA UNIVERSITIES

In this section, I discuss some curriculum transformation policy frameworks from selected South African universities: University of Pretoria, North West University, University of Cape Town, University of Free State, University of Stellenbosch, and UNISA, the context of my empirical inquiry (chapters 4 and 5). I searched for the transformation frameworks for all the universities in South Africa on the universities' websites, but only the six listed above were freely accessible on the universities' websites at the time of writing this thesis.

Before critiquing the policy frameworks, I provide an overview of the selected policy frameworks. I focused on the dominant themes in each policy. I then analyse text segments and themes in the documents which I see as related to decolonisation of teaching and learning. I also selected parts of the documents which address epistemological, ontological and axiological issues because such areas are relevant to my study, which explores the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. The section is intended to establish the extent to which the universities have attempted to adopt decolonisation in planning curriculum transformation. Therefore, this section seeks to contextualise this current study. The fact institutions have drafted guiding principles to the decolonisation project is an indication of their commitment to the project.

3.6.1 Curriculum transformation framework of the University of Pretoria (UP)

The transformation document which was accessible on the University of Pretoria (UP) website was the institution's transformation framework draft for discussion. Any further searches which I did to check if there was any accessible transformation policy available on the website was futile. In its introduction, the UP curriculum transformation draft (UP 2016) is pivotal on four drivers: a) responsiveness to social content; b) epistemological diversity; c) renewal of pedagogy and classroom reflection; and d) an instituting a culture of openness and critical reflection. The draft also alludes to the fact that curriculum transformation will involve continuous rethinking and reevaluation of the ways of teaching and learning, encouraging epistemic diversity and pluraversality and excavating recuperating African, Latin American and Asian knowledge systems and practices. The draft also expresses the university's aim to dismantle institutional hierarchies. This draft claims to create a dialogue and democracy at all levels at the institution (UP 2016).

3.6.2 Curriculum transformation framework of North West University (NWU)

The framework for curriculum transformation at North West University (NWU) is a seven page document which was approved by the university's senate on 30 October

2018. The preamble of NWU transformation framework is a declaration by the institution that it commits itself to decolonisation of teaching and learning and its approach to research and community engagement (NWU 2018). The framework indicates from the outset that guidelines and strategies for the decolonisation process will be addressed at faculty level wherein the current faculty and that integrated teaching and learning plans will provide guidance. Curriculum transformation at the NWU is underpinned by the following principles: a) transformation of teaching and learning; b) transformation and research agenda; and c) transformation of community engagement and service learning. NWU views the decolonisation of university education as a call to promote greater relevance, reorientate its focus on African knowledge systems and enhance students' experience with the curriculum (NWU 2018).

3.6.3 Curriculum transformation framework of the University of Cape Town (UCT)

As a result of the student led university protests in 2015-2016, the then Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town (UCT) set up the Curriculum Change Working Group (CCWG) in 2016. This task team was established to facilitate the institution's engagements on curricula matters. The outcome of the Task Team's engagements was the development of a Curriculum Change Framework which is considered the institution's discussion document which invites comments and opinions from academic units at the institution on their understanding of curriculum change which would be considered to enrich the document for (UCT 2019). Recommendations made in the Curriculum Change Framework are:

1. Authentic engagements which drive meaningful change;
2. Leadership which has a track-record in addressing inequalities in academy;
3. The institution should blend formal structures with new emergent structures;
4. Texts from epistemologically disenfranchised knowledge systems should become core reading material;
5. Individuals from marginalised groups should increasingly become drivers of research;

6. Transdisciplinary knowledge must be encouraged;
7. Pedagogy of inclusivity and social justice must be embraced;
8. Assessment should be re-conceptualised and include practices which encourage assessment for learning;
9. Student input in curriculum change is important.

3.6.4 The Transformation Plan of Stellenbosch University (SU)

The Transformation Plan of Stellenbosch University (SU) is an implementation plan aimed to realise the university's Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019-2024 in all faculties (SU 2017). It was amended and approved by the Rector's Management Team and Senate in March 2017 after some campus wide consultations (SU 2017). In its introduction, the transformation framework outlines that it draws on external policy documents: the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, White Paper on Education and Training, Programme for Transformation of Higher Education and Social Cohesion and Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions, the 2015 Durban Statement on Transformation in Higher Education Summit and Human Rights Commission Report on Transformation in Higher Education 2017 (SU 2017). The transformation plan was drafted during the 2015- 2016 student protests against high tuition fees and a call for the decolonised curriculum, among other students' demands.

The transformation plan is pivotal on three major drivers. The first driver is the call for social inclusion rooted in African principles and to validate diverse identities and needs. The second one is transformation which seeks to develop and expand curriculum renewal, research and teaching methodologies. Section 4.2.2 of the plan outlines the expansion which aims to ensure relevance of teaching and learning programmes in the contexts of Africanisation, decolonisation and global competitiveness. The third driver focuses on transformation of the people of the university, that is, university staff, students and other stakeholders. The transformation plan succinctly outlines that policies and procedures of the institutions should stick to the transformation parameters of the institution (US 2017).

3.6.5 Integrated Transformation Plan for the University of Free State (UFS)

In January 2017, the University of Free State (UFS) developed its Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP) framework (UFS 2017). It has been an implementation tool of the UFS Strategic Plan 2018-2022 since 2018 (UFS 2020). This document was collaboratively developed by a representative team of student leadership, union representatives and members of the University Council which identified the areas of transformation on which the UFS needed to focus. The framework document is also built on reports such as the Soudien Report of 2008, the 2016 Report on Transformation at Universities in South Africa and the UFS transformation report of 2016. The framework was approved by the university Council in March 2017 (UFS 2017).

The ITP team consisted of ten work streams which were categorised into three broad areas. The first area is core functions consisting of Teaching and Learning, Research, Internationalisation and Innovation and Engaged Scholarship. The second area is entitled University culture. Under this category are four streams: Student experience, Staff experience and Composition, Name, Symbols and Spaces and Universal Access. The third area is entitled Structural Issues. Under this area are three work streams: Financial Framework, Governance, Policy Administration and Multi-Campus Model (UFS 2017).

In its introduction, the ITP illuminates the commitment of the UFS in five major areas which are:

1. Instigating a curriculum review which will interrogate the marginalisation of particular identities and philosophies of knowledge, incorporating scholarship from Africa and the Global South;
2. Emphasising methodologies and practices which promote student access;
3. Advancing the UFS as a research-led university with an increased knowledge contribution locally, continentally and globally;
4. Accentuating the improvement of the UFS's engagement with society at large;

5. Strengthening the administrative systems to develop robust, stable and socially just processes underpinning the operational structures in the University (UFS 2017).

3.6.6 The Integrated Transformation Strategy University of South Africa (UNISA)

The Integrated Transformation Strategy for UNISA (UNISA 2019b) is an eighteen page document which was updated in August 2019.

Section 2 of UNISA (2019b: 4) explicates the institution's vision, mission and values which reads "*the African University shaping futures in the service of humanity*". Captured in the term 'African university' is the illumination of African centredness in the institution's endeavours (UNISA 2019b). Notwithstanding its pledge to an African focused institution, the university is cognisant of the compelling need to be globally competitive. Thus, the institution visualises itself as one which aspires to mould the future of its clientele. The vision further sets the university apart from other local university institutions in the country. Unlike those institutions which merely idealise their African centredness, UNISA claims to be different as it conscientiously mainstreams and affirms African knowledge and scholarship. In order to realise its aspirations, UNISA is guided by lifelong learning, student centredness, innovation and creativity (UNISA 2014; 2019b). These four principles capture the mission and values of the institution.

Section three of UNISA (2019b) details the institution conceptualisation of the transformation of higher education. While acknowledging a wide array of definitions of transformation, UNISA's understanding of the term can be summed up in three ways. First, transformation should be understood as a comprehensive, deep-rooted process of eradicating all kinds of unfair discrimination (UNISA 2014; 2015; 2019b). This definition seeks to draw some attention to the intention of the institution to eradicate injustices in the institution as a whole. Furthermore, the institution relates to the radical destruction of institutional barriers to decolonisation, deracialisation and degendering of universities in the country (UNISA 2014). Section two (UNISA 2019) emphasises

that this could be achieved through engaging with epistemological and ontological issues. The institution also conceptualises decolonising the university as challenging the positioning of Eurocentric knowledges at the centre of learning while peripherising Africa and taking other parts of the world as passive recipients of the hegemonised knowledges.

In a nutshell, transformation at UNISA is understood as to what is experienced by those who are affected by its implementation. Simply put, the lived experiences of a transformed education is felt by the stakeholders such as students, staff and the communities which engage with the institution at different levels and for various reasons (Mendey and Madiope 2020:8). Nonetheless, the transformation of the curriculum should not be simply understood as the replacement of Global North by conservative African knowledge systems (UNISA 2019b). Instead, the needs of the twenty-first century students and academics should be considered to ensure that the best of African, Latin America and Asian perspectives are integrated into the curriculum offerings. I argue that it is critical to interrogate the criteria which can be used to select the best which humanity has produced across the disciplines. UNISA's Integrated Transformation Strategy (UNISA 2019b) fails to provide detailed information on the methods it will use to determine best fit knowledges. This is problematic since the Global South, such as Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania, (Palomino 2019: 24) may have different understandings of what can be described as best knowledges.

In locating transformation at UNISA, the institution draws from four approaches to transformation: the legislative, reformist, compliance and radical activist approaches (UNISA 2019b). The legislative approach is driven by the different legislative policies at national level. The reformist approach focuses on negotiating change through planned intervention strategies. The compliance approach is based on ensuring that set targets are achieved. The radical activist approach considers transformation as an imperative. By drawing from each of the four approaches, the institution aims to benefit from various strengths of each (UNISA 2019b). The institution's transformation agenda is also located within the current and future national policy frameworks. Drawing from the statutory framework is mandatory insofar as the university seeks to comply with

national directives of higher education. It is important to note that since the university uses inclusive ways of transforming the institution, it draws from the reformist approach which ensures that all stakeholders in the institution play a part.

In order to effectively transform across the eight dimensions, the document outlines five pathways of change (UNISA 2019b) which are:

- a) Transformation, epistemology, knowledge and scholarship;
- b) Changing institutional culture;
- c) Rethinking systems and policies;
- d) Rethinking government, leadership and management in higher education;
- e) Promoting discourse for change.

3.6.7 A critique of the selected curriculum transformation policy frameworks

Before critiquing the curriculum transformation policy documents of the selected universities, I provide a brief account of the 2015- 2016 student protest movements in South African universities as developments which are important in contextualising the study. Since curriculum transformation frameworks in South African universities is a recent discourse, I did not find any studies conducted on the implementation of the recent decolonising curricula transformation frameworks. My critique is therefore largely based on my personal interpretation of the policy documents.

The student led protests illuminated and emphasised a plethora of reasons for their dissatisfaction (Hlatshwayo, et al. 2020; Mampane, Omidire and Aluko 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018; Shava and Manyike 2018; Padayachee et al. 2018). Causes of the students' dissatisfaction included lack of proficiency in the medium of instruction, post-school unemployment, inadequate student funding, high student dropout rates and discrepancies between graduates and skills required in the job market (Booyesen 2016; Lange 2017; 2018; Musitha and Mafukata 2018, Shava and Manyike 2018). It is evident in the selected universities' curriculum policy frameworks that each framework was designed in response to the popular demands of the student protest movement of 2015- 2016. Needless to say, analysis of context is important. The analysis helps

to understand how educational policies change. I believe that it is from such historical contexts as student protests of 2015-2016 that it becomes feasible to assess how far contextual factors may influence policy outcomes.

All the six policy documents summarised above are written in English. English is thus the primary medium of communication and research. The hegemony of English should thus be noted at the outset. As higher learning institutions in South Africa pay homage to English dominance, it remains a challenge to implement the decolonial agenda. In my view the decolonisation of the university should start with the implementation of the language in education policy which promotes the indigenous language medium of instruction in basic education. As empowered users of English, we stand as an extended province of the West as we continue to use English as the language in research, teaching and learning. It is needless to point out that when a language is revered above others, it places a great challenge to end its hegemony.

In critiquing the selected policy documents, I identified the following themes: epistemological diversity, decolonisation of pedagogy and dismantling institutional hierarchies. I identified these themes guided by one of the research questions as outlined in chapter 1 of this study namely, how is the concept of decolonisation of the university curriculum addressed in literature?

3.6.7.1 Epistemological diversity

Effort is made in each of the six policy documents to allude to an undertaking to consider epistemological diversity. All the statements about the wish to promote epistemological diversity are steps in the right direction. I interpret such statements by the various universities as affirmation that some epistemes have been marginalised and institutions need to deal with such a challenge.

The UP curriculum transformation framework (UP 2016) clearly outlines that it endeavours towards recuperating African, Latin American and Asian knowledge systems. The UFS policy document clearly articulates that the institution seeks to integrate the philosophies and knowledges of marginalised identities to what is already

in use. NWU is determined to reorientate its focus on African knowledge systems. UNISA outlines that best African, Latin and Asian perspectives should be central in its curriculum. US policy articulates the institution's commitment to validating diverse identities and calls for social inclusion rooted in the African principles. It is clear that UP, UFS and UNISA embrace epistemes from the rest of the Global South as part of their curricula. On the other hand, UCT, SU and NWU curriculum policies are silent about Latin American and Asian knowledge systems. The institutions only seek to centre African principles in the curricula. I foresee the danger in the silence about marginalised knowledges from Latin America, Asia and the Global South. The silence may imply that eventually, academics and students will essentialise African epistemes at the expense of other knowledge systems in the classroom and in research. I opine that the curriculum transformation planners could have succinctly elaborated the positions of all knowledge systems in the curricula. This could help readers and users of the policies avoid making assumptions about particular knowledge systems. More clarity is needed about the place of Western knowledge systems and other knowledge systems which have not been mentioned in some policy documents.

3.6.7.2 Decolonisation of pedagogy

UCT clearly articulates its desire to use texts from epistemologically disenfranchised knowledge systems as core reading material. The institution also commits to pedagogy of inclusivity and social justice. Similarly, SU commits to use of relevant teaching methodologies and programmes. However, the two institutional policy documents fail to provide details of the relevant decolonised methodologies which academics should use in developing teaching programmes or when they deliver the curriculum content to the students. Lack of detail on how this should be achieved leaves one with many questions. For example, I would ask at which graduate level are the decolonised methodologies applicable. Is it relevant to undergraduate teaching? At which year level of study has the policy been implemented?

Having noted the above, I realise that UNISA, UFS, NWU and UP policies are silent about use of decolonised teaching methods. This silence is worrying. It could be interpreted as implying that the curricula transformation framework contents are mere

cosmetic change. Evidence from literature shows that in some contexts, agents of curriculum development play a critical role to ensure that hegemonic tendencies associated with colonialism and apartheid remain at the centre of teaching and learning (Apple 2018; De Sousa Santos 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018). Those agents may include politicians and policy developers who are not experts in the field of curriculum (Jansen 2017; 2019). With the absence of anything close to how teaching ought to be conducted to promote decolonised teaching, I argue that the transformation agendas remain an ideal, a rhetoric which has been designed to serve the purpose of compliance.

I propose a curriculum plan which stipulates a clear student-teacher relationship which promotes infusion of different cultural teaching orientations to accommodate students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Academics in the classrooms should also constantly ask themselves about what they intend to teach and how important is this content. In a decolonised teaching approach, I see it imperative for academics to check whose knowledge they are teaching and whether they have inculcated the knowledge of the students in their classes (Kahu and Nelson 2018). When the curriculum is aligned to students' interests and experiences they engage on an emotional level so learning can take place more easily than otherwise (Angu, Boakye and Eybers 2020; Smith 2012; Smith and Smith 2018). I am of the opinion that when a transformation plan captures typical decolonised teaching methods, it looks more realistic and practical than when it only mentions decolonised teaching and learning in passing.

3.6.7.3 Decolonising institutional hierarchies

The plan to have university leaderships with track records of disrupting inequalities is a step towards the right direction in the decolonisation project. University leadership which focuses on transforming people of the university would mean having a higher education sector which is committed to dismantling the top-down hierarchical approaches. Top-down hierarchical traditions are commonplace in African universities (Fanon 1963; Heleta 2018; Mbembe 2015; Mudimbe 2016). Dismantling those hierarchies will enhance inclusivity and do away with clear power differentiations

between the academics and students, or leadership and general working staff. Power disruptions will also help to dismantle gaps between dominant student groups and the marginalised groups. Adapting those pedagogical methods would promote ideals such as *ubuntu* as conceptualised by Le Grange (2016).

3.6.8 Similarities in curriculum transformation documents

In short the curriculum transformation policy frameworks discussed in this section share similarities. The documents also largely came into being as response to the 2015- 2016 student protests which mushroomed throughout the universities in South Africa. Central to the frameworks are: a) the need to interrogate marginalisation of specific groups of students at institutions; b) marginalisation of African knowledge systems in the pedagogical policy and practices; and c) rampant structural imbalances in the running of the different university institutions in the country. The curriculum transformation policy frameworks reviewed also highlight the roadmap that each institution pledges to adhere to in resolving those issues. In my opinion, the curriculum transformation policies set aside a mammoth task for every university in South Africa. Great commitment and hard work await the academics to ensure the effectiveness of the decolonisation project. It is a complicated agenda which needs thorough planning and clear implementation action plans.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on the related literature on the issue of decolonisation of higher education and the curriculum reforms in South African higher education since 1994. The discussion on previous literature has revealed that the concept of decolonisation is complicated in many university institutions in the world. Different people understand the concept differently and as such, it is a terrain of contested debate in the field of education. The chapter also discussed the guiding policy framework in transforming higher education in South Africa since 1994. The chapter ends with a critique of selected South African university curriculum transformation frameworks as a way of further contextualising this current study.

The next chapter describes the research design and methodology for this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. The previous chapter focused on a literature review on the decolonisation of higher education in different university contexts around the world. It further critiqued various South African university curriculum transformation frameworks. This chapter discusses the research design and explores the research paradigm, data collection methods and the approach to be used in analysing the data using a qualitative approach. Describing the methodology to be used in this study justifies the suitability of the methodological approaches that I used to gather data. The final section of the chapter details issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues in order to elaborate the justification of how the research may be accepted as a meaningful contribution.

The study used the case study design which is a qualitative method of inquiry (Gooden 2020; Nguyen 2019). It is closely aligned to the interpretative phenomenological inquiry because the aim is to develop insights from the perspectives of those who are involved in the experience (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). It is an approach about searching for meanings and experiences about a phenomenon (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). Through the use of hermeneutics, reflexivity helped me to interpret meanings. I preferred using this design to any other because of its main features, that is, rich data and foci on meanings. This design suited the topic of the study because it helped in understanding the perceptions of the participants. Although a sample which is relatively small cannot be representative of all the students in South African universities, this type of research results in rich data.

The next section is on research paradigm.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

In this section, I discuss the different research paradigms, paradigm elements and specifically the interpretative paradigm which underpins the study.

The word 'paradigm' originates from the Greek word *paradeigma* which means pattern (Mackenzie and Knipe 2006; Makombe 2017; Perera 2018). In scientific research, the term paradigm is used to explain researchers' worldviews (Kaushik and Walsh 2019; Kivunja and Kuyini 2017). Similarly, Cohen et al. (2011) view a paradigm as a wide structure of beliefs, perceptions and awareness of different theories used to carry out scientific research. In other words, it is the window through which a researcher looks at and understands the world (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017). Writing about research paradigms, scholars such as Cohen et al. (2011), Creswell (2007), Taylor and Medina (2013) and Okesina (2020) observe that a research paradigm provides philosophical orientations which play influential roles about what should be studied, how it should be studied and how the study results should be interpreted. All this can be determined if the elements of a research paradigm are considered. In writing about these elements, Cohen et al. (2011), Guba and Lincoln (1989), Kamal (2019), Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) and Zukauskas, Vveinhardt and Andriukaitiene (2018) identify three paradigm element: ontology, epistemology and methodology. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) add axiology as the fourth paradigm element.

The next subsection elaborates on the four paradigm elements.

4.2.1 Ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological orientations

Ontology is a branch of philosophy which is concerned about the nature of existence (Bryman 2012; Cohen et al. 2000:5; Kivunja and Kuyini 2017; Lincoln and Guba 2013; Makombe 2017; Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill and Bristow 2019). In simpler terms, Lincoln and Guba (2013:39) clarify that "ontology provides answers to such questions as "what is the nature of reality?", or "what is there that can be known?" The answers which arise from such questions therefore orientate researchers' thinking about the

research problem, its significance and how the research problem may be approached in order to contribute to the existing knowledge (Nguyen 2019). Having noted thus, it should be highlighted that from an interpretivist paradigm that ultimate truth does not exist (Antwi and Hamza 2015: 218; Creswell 2014; Kamal 2019). It follows then that reality is subjective and always changing (Lincoln and Guba 2013).

Epistemology deals with knowledge of the truth or reality (Okesina 2020; Saunders et al. 2019). It focuses on the nature of knowledge hence providing answers to such questions as “what is knowledge? How do we know what we know? Or how is knowledge acquired or accessed?” The understanding of the relationship between the one who knows and what is known also contributes to epistemology (Creswell and Clark 2011; Kaushik and Walsh 2019). The goal is to know how knowledge is acquired to enable researchers find ways of extending and broadening knowledge in their various fields of studies. It is crucial to note that within the interpretivist paradigm, researchers have, as individuals, their own understanding of what knowledge is and what reality is (Chilisa and Kawulich 2012; Kamal 2019). It is such understanding which influences the researchers’ thoughts and views about themselves and other people. Questions related to epistemology are aimed at determining whether knowledge is something which has to be acquired or personally experienced (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017).

As professed by Hughes (1995: 21), ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions which have a bearing on methodological implications on the choice of particular data collection techniques. Lincoln and Guba (2013) observe that the epistemological explanations are limited by ontological explanations of research. Thus as advised by Cohen et al. (2000) and Nguyen (2019) different ontologies and epistemologies used by a researcher would require different types of methodology.

According to Lincoln and Guba (2013), methodology relates to how one goes about acquiring knowledge. It can also be explained as the method which researchers use in conducting any investigation. I opine that if methodology entails the method used in conducting an investigation, then research paradigms, research techniques, research

design and approach, and every other step taken in conducting the investigation constitutes the research methodology.

Axiology entails the role of values and ethics in research (Okesina 2020; Nguyen 2019; Saunders et al. 2019). Elaborating about axiology in research, Okesina (2020) notes that different research paradigms include four axiology aspects: value-laden; value neutral; value laden and balanced; value laden biased culture sensitive and value driven. Value laden, biased and cultural sensitive axiology calls for the researchers to recognise cultural norms and their inherent biases (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017). In other words, the researchers are biased due to their orientations and cultural experiences which impact on the study. The value laden and balanced axiology assumes researchers who account for their own biases and those of the participants when presenting the research findings (Nguyen 2019). The value driven axiology, which is characteristic of the pragmatic paradigm, portrays the researcher's values as playing a huge role in research (Kivunja and Kuyini 2019; Saunders et al. 2019). The value driven axiology engages the researchers as influenced by both the research problem and questions.

To address axiological issues in this study, some detailed description of my roles as a researcher and ethical considerations are provided in section 4.3.4 of this chapter.

From the discussion made in this section so far, I conceptualise a research paradigm as a constellation of beliefs and orientations which mould how researchers choose to interpret actions within the research contexts. Thus in a research context, a paradigm becomes a conceptual lens through which researchers examine the ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological aspects of their research project in order to choose appropriate research methods as well as data analysis procedures to be utilised. To shed some more light, I concur with Guba (1990) that research paradigms can be determined through answering ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological questions. One can see that the above defined dimensions influence one another. Thus, the choice of a particular ontological paradigm has a bearing on how the knowledge about the nature of reality is

researched; hence, it influences the methods and instruments of data gathering which a researcher uses.

Different research paradigms can be distinguished from each other by the difference in their ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. Cohen et al. (2011) identify three approaches which are used in research: positivism, the interpretative paradigm and critical research, which are discussed below respectively. Other scholars identify the fourth approach as pragmatics (McMillan and Schumacher 2014; Nguyen 2019; Okesina 2020).

Sub sections 4.2.2 to 4.2.5 below discuss the four research paradigms respectively.

4.2.2 Positivism

Positivism can be used to explore social reality. The positivist approach is based on the ideas of August Comte, a French philosopher (Hammersley 2012; Ryan 2018). Positivist assumptions are premised on the idea that true knowledge is based on experience and can be obtained through observations and experiments. These observations and experiments are conducted in order to test hypotheses and search for cause and effect relationships of variables (Mertens 2015; Nguyen 2019). Positivists argue that truth or reality is objective as such it does not depend on social construction (Antwi and Hamza 2015; Cohen et al. 2018). These researchers also argue that because reality is objective, then knowledge is made of facts. According to Bryman (2012), and Ryan (2018), context is unimportant within a positivist paradigm. What guides the research processes are the laws and theories which can be tested, resulting in the generalisation of research results. The positivists regard human behaviour as passive and controllable by external factors (Ryan 2018). The positivist tradition is associated with the quantitative research approach whose ultimate purpose is to predict, control and generalise the research findings (Kamal 2018). Thus, ontologically, positivism is objective.

The next subsection is a snapshot of what the interpretive research paradigm entails.

4.2.3 Interpretivism

Scholars in the social sciences criticise the positivist framework for being inadequate in researching social issues or human beings (Flick 2014; Ryan 2018). Cohen et al. (2011) assert that relations observed in laboratories or controlled settings may not be the same in the complicated external world where a number of factors interact. This view is also shared by Tuli (2011), who posits that the scientific approach which positivism espouses is inadequate in investigating people's understanding of the world and the strategies used to cope with and change it. In this study I adopted the interpretive paradigm in which researchers acknowledge the way people interpret the meaning of the world around them (Cohen et al. 2011; Creswell 2014). The interpretivist research paradigm emanated from the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and Wilhelm Dilthey and other German philosophers' studies of interpretive understanding called hermeneutics (Mertens 2005). The role of the interpretivist paradigm in research is to understand the world of human experience in context.

Those who subscribe to an interpretivist research paradigm share a common assumption of the differences between the nature of phenomena investigated through natural sciences and those investigated through social sciences such educational researchers (Creswell 2014; Hammersley 2012; Kamal 2019). Such an argument stems from the fact that human beings, unlike atoms or non-human objects, give meaning and value to themselves and their environments (Lincoln and Guba 2013; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). In other words, interpretivists believe that human behaviour is shaped by specific cultures in which people live. Such cultures contribute to the development of the actions performed by people or institutions in which they participate. Interpretivism is sometimes referred to as social constructivism (Guba and Lincoln 2005).

In social constructivism, philosophical thought is premised on the belief that human beings develop varied, multiple subjective meanings of their experiences (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017; Nguyen 2019). Because of multiple meanings of reality, social constructivists look for complex views rather than narrowing meanings to limited ideas

or categories (Creswell 2014; Creswell and Creswell 2018; Taylor and Medina 2013). Thus, in interpretative or constructivist orientated studies, the goal of the research is to rely on the participants' views of the phenomenon being studied. In this study, I relied on the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

Interpretative researchers therefore, argue that in order to understand why and how people do what they do, or why an institution exists and operates in a particular way, there is dire need to grasp how people or institutions make sense of the world (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017; Nguyen 2019; Taylor and Medina 2013). Explicating how this can be possible for an interpretative researcher, Kamal (2019) and Nguyen (2019) caution that the researchers need to suspend their prior assumptions and attitudes. Suspension of researchers' cultural, perceptions and beliefs enable them to appreciate their research participants' ways of being. Thus, the ontology of interpretivism is relativist or subjective.

Thus, from an interpretative viewpoint, researchers discover knowledge by interacting with the experiences of those who are being studied. The researchers' interpretation of participant experience adds to existing knowledge. On epistemology, interpretivists assume that knowledge and meanings are results of interpretation as such they argue that objective knowledge is nonexistent. Such an argument illuminates that what is regarded as objective knowledge is underpinned by thinking or human reasoning (Merriam and Tisdell 2016). Interpretivist researchers opine that knowledge is accessed through language and shared meanings (Cohen, et al. 2011; Creswell 2014; Kamal 2018; Nguyen 2019). Interpretivist research does not predefine dependent and independent variables. It rather dwells on the full complexity of how people make sense as situations emerge (Kaplan and Maxwell 1994).

From the discussion above, I concur that from an interpretative perspective, reality is socially constructed. People construct meanings as they engage with the world which they seek to understand (Kamal 2019). I further argue that as people interact among themselves and engage with their environments in seeking meaning, they are influenced by their historical and cultural orientations. As a result qualitative

researchers tend to use open ended questions to provide opportunities to research participants wherein they can share their varied views (McMillan and Schumacher 2014; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). It is therefore incumbent upon the researchers to study the contexts and settings to understand the participants' historical and cultural influences which shape their worldviews.

The critical research paradigm is discussed in the following subsection.

4.2.4 Critical paradigm

The critical paradigm seeks to situate research in social justice issues. Research premised on the critical paradigm addresses social and economic issues, oppression, conflict and power structures at different levels in the domains of life (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017:35). The critical paradigm seeks to change politics and confront social ills to promote social justice (Mertens 2015). Within the critical paradigm, the research epistemology is transactional, as researchers interact with participants (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017). Ontologically, the critical paradigm is premised on historical realism since it relates to issues of oppression. Historical realism and transactional epistemology naturally dictate dialogical methodologies (Creswell 2014; Creswell and Clark 2011). Needless to say, the critical paradigm commands an axiology which respects cultural norms. The dialogical and transactional approaches to research result in critical paradigm researchers adopting participatory or action research in their studies (Creswell 2014; Mertens 2015).

The fourth paradigm is discussed in the next subsection.

4.2.5 Pragmatic paradigm

The fourth and last research approach to be discussed in this section is the pragmatic paradigm. Proponents of this school of thought argue that it is unrealistic to access the truth about the world via a single scientific method such as positivism or interpretivism (Bryman 2012; Kaushik and Walsh 2019; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003). The pragmatic philosophers further argue for a worldview which is pluralistic (Creswell and

Clark 2011; Mertens 2015). Pragmatism is premised on the assumption that researchers should use approaches which work best for a particular research problem being investigated (Kaushik and Walsh 2019). Pluralistic approaches allow for a combination of methods in order to understand human behaviour (Postma 2015; Polush and Boltz 2017). Researchers who abide by pragmatic approach make use of mixed methods in their studies (Bryman 2012). Such an approach allows researchers to combine both quantitative and qualitative methods with value-laden axiology in their studies.

For the purpose of this study, I used the interpretative paradigm as elaborated in the next subsection.

4.2.6 Paradigm underpinning current study

This study used the interpretivist phenomenological paradigm which is a philosophical, qualitative method of inquiry based within the humanistic research paradigm (Creswell and Creswell 2018). The goal of interpretative phenomenological inquiry is to fully develop insights from the perspectives of those who are involved in the experience (Pietkiewicz and Smith 2014). It is an approach about searching for meanings and experiences about a phenomenon, (McMillan and Schumacher 2014: 382). In this study my focus was on exploring perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

Interpretivist phenomenology differs from other forms of experimentation, which call for researchers to develop a hypothesis, design a research study and test variables for results (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). Instead, researchers turn to phenomenological research so that a phenomenon can reveal itself in its fullness and inevitably speak for itself. It is also described by Grbich (2013) as an approach which attempts to understand the hidden meanings and the essence of an experience together with how participants make sense of these.

Phenomenology is a complex concept to understand, particularly because it includes various meanings and methods (Van Manen 2017:1). It is referred to as a philosophy; inquiry paradigm; theory; social science, analytical perspective; qualitative tradition; or a research method framework (Creswell 2007).

Interpretive phenomenology has three core attributes which I adhered to in this study, namely, the researcher conducts the study by focusing on individuals' life experiences; the researcher is the actual data gathering instrument; and the researcher identifies, and makes meaning of, a phenomenon based upon actual experiences of individuals (Creswell 2007). In this study, I explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Thus, I explored the meaning of several individuals' lived experiences of the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution.

The phenomenological interpretative stance which is mostly associated with a case study is that of social constructivism. In this study, I adopted a constructivist epistemology because knowledge and truth are assumed to be social constructs rather than independent of the values and beliefs of the participants (Creswell 2009). The focus in this study was on the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Johnson (2009: 1-2) clarifies:

“How an individual learns something, what is learned, and how it is used will depend on the sum of the individual's prior experiences, the social cultural contexts in which it takes place and what the individual wants, needs or is expected to do with that knowledge.”

It is clear that each paradigm is premised on specific assumptions. Thus, the choice of a paradigm for any research implies that the research will be nested in a particular epistemology, ontology and axiology which influence the methodology of a study. This study explored perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. I adopted an interpretative research paradigm which seeks to elicit different forms of

realities from different participants. The interpretive paradigm resonates with the critical race theory on which the study is framed. Applied to the discourse of decolonisation, the interpretivist research paradigm enabled the eliciting and collection of rich data on the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students. In addition, the paradigm assisted in engaging the senior academics as reflective practitioners in the implementation of a decolonised curriculum. It also promoted postgraduate student engagements in reflecting upon their roles as partakers of the decolonised curriculum.

In the following section, I described the research methodology for the current study.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study is described in the subsections which follow.

4.3.1 Qualitative research

This research study was conducted within the qualitative research tradition because, according to Punch (2005:142), a “case study is a qualitative research design”. Writing about qualitative research, Creswell (2007:37) points out:

“Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individual or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.”

Creswell’s (2007) definition emphasises the importance of assumptions and worldviews which provide the basis of the paradigm. In order to study a qualitative research problem, researchers use an emerging qualitative approach of enquiry (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). The collection of qualitative data is conducted in a natural setting where behaviours are studied as they occur naturally (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). In other words, there is no manipulation of behaviours or settings. As qualitative researchers learn about the setting, the participants and other sources of information, they are able to describe the phenomenon under investigation.

Furthermore Gray (20014) claims that data presentation in qualitative research includes voices of research participants, the reflectivity of the researchers, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem.

Reliance on the participants' voices and experiences as well as my reflectivity align with the interpretative hermeneutic analysis methodological principles. My choice of qualitative methodology was influenced by the need to pursue the thick rich descriptions of lived experiences of both senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

Qualitative research methodology focuses on the process of gathering, analysing, interpreting and explaining the overall meaning from non-quantified data (Creswell 214). Furthermore, the role of qualitative researchers is to work in settings which are a commonplace to participants and make sense of those phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. By doing so, researchers gain a more authentic understanding of how an individual views a particular phenomenon (Creswell 2008). In order to gain data that are holistic, various qualitative research methods and traditions must be employed (McMillan and Schumacher 2014; Parsons and Harding 2011). These methods are discussed in section 4.3.7 of this chapter. The qualitative research tradition used in this study is based on interpretive case study and supported by hermeneutic inquiry.

The phenomenon to be studied is the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. In discussing phenomenology, it is crucial to emphasise that the concept of phenomenology is pre-reflective and reports only participants' essence with a phenomenon (Ajjawi and Higgs 2007). Further interpretation is needed to explain the actual, lived experience of participants' views and perceptions of the phenomenon (Ajjawi and Higgs 2007). For this reason, hermeneutics is incorporated into the research design.

Hermeneutics is an inquiry model founded by Frederich Schleiermacher (Schleiermacher 1977). Hermeneutics is the art of understanding the meaning of words uttered by other people correctly (Schleiermacher 1977). Thus, it is associated with phenomenology which deals with researcher's role in reporting and interpreting participants' experiences (Patton 2002). Smith (1997:80) describes hermeneutics as a "research methodology aimed at producing rich textual descriptions of the experiences of selected individuals on a particular phenomenon under investigation. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) advise that the focus should not be exclusively on verbal transcription, but instead on implied and hidden meaning. Thus, hermeneutists construct reality on basis of their interpretations of data with the help of the research participants (Pietkiewicz and Smith 2014). Similar to phenomenology, hermeneutics focuses on human experiences as they are lived with emphasis on details of such experience for generating meaning and an understanding of the phenomenon. It requires researchers' abilities to combine a range of skills such as intuition, reflection and provision of detailed interpretive accounts.

The hermeneutic phenomenological data that I gathered comprised my personal notations of the phenomenon, participants' data, and contextual information about their perceptions, on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution. I am knowledgeable of curriculum decolonisation changes facing South Africa over a period of eight years. Notwithstanding the value my prior knowledge of decolonisation challenges in postcolonial African contexts, I strove to guard against biased intuitions which may arise from such experiences.

The next subsection describes the research approach which I used in this study.

4.3.2 The case study research approach

This study explored perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. To achieve this I focused on a single university and used the case study approach.

Yin (2017) defines a case study as a scientific inquiry which investigates a contemporary phenomenon in its real world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and event may not be clearly evident. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), a case study is an in-depth analysis of a single case and Creswell (2014) refers to it as an in-depth exploration of a bounded system like an activity, event, process or individuals. Being bounded means being unique according to place, time and participant characteristics (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). My study explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students; hence I chose the case study to gain a rich and vivid description of their experiences. Through the use of case study, I was able to delve into great detail of the participants' experiences on the decolonisation of a university curriculum.

Punch (2015) suggests that a case study approach can be used when investigating an individual, an organisation, an industry, a workplace, an educational programme a policy or a country. My case was UNISA, an ODeL institution. The institution's curriculum framework has been recently changed to cater for the demands for decolonisation of curricula in response to the 2015-2016 student protests. Choosing this institution's main campus as the case study enabled me to empathise with the participants and explore their perceptions regarding the decolonisation of the university curriculum at the institution.

There are three different types of case studies which McMillan and Schumacher (2014) describe as follows:

1. An intrinsic case where the focus is on the case itself and which aims to investigate unusual or unique individuals, groups or events and where no attempt is made to generalise the case or build theories.
2. An instrumental case in which a case is examined largely to provide insight into an issue or to revive a generalisation.
3. A collective case where more than one example or setting is studied.

Of these three types, my study falls under the intrinsic case. I had an intrinsic interest in this case with no agenda to generalise the findings which emerged from the

empirical investigation. Generalisations of case study results is not the objective especially where the case may be important, interesting or misunderstood with the result that it deserves study in its own right. By conducting an intrinsic case, I studied an important, unique case which was of interest to me.

There are various advantages of using case studies in qualitative studies. According to Yin (2014), case studies allow researchers to maintain the full focus on a particular case as well as to preserve holistic, meaningful characteristics of real life events. By implication case studies give researchers an opportunity to look at the phenomenon as a whole. In this study, it was important to gain insight of senior academics and postgraduate students' perceptions of the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Because this study used an interpretative perspective whose aim was to explore social realities and participant perceptions on decolonisation of university curriculum, it suited the case study approach. The case study approach gave voice to the participants to express themselves. This approach was apt and aligned with the critical race theories that aim to give a voice to those who are being studied.

According to Van Manen (1990), a case study allows researchers to document multiple viewpoints and highlight areas where there is consensus and conflict. Thus, it gives researchers a platform to choose from many different data collection methods which they deem suitable in each case. This lends flexibility in how data is collected. Despite the many advantages of the case study, Yin (2014) warns researchers against becoming overwhelmed by loads of data gathered. In this study, my study consisted of twenty-eight participants consisting of sixteen senior academics and twelve postgraduate students, which is a manageable number whose data was not overwhelming to analyse and interpret.

It was justifiable to use case study in this study since the research falls within the critical race paradigm where focus is on institutional transformation, hence giving voice to the powerless and voiceless. Premised on the critical race perspective, I made use of the case study design in which the participants were given a voice to articulate their perceptions. I used the CRT perspective to discuss the findings from the senior

academics and postgraduate students who participated in this study. This study recognised the critical race scenario as a strong determinant of the participants' perceptions and the decolonisation of the UNISA curriculum rather than a basis for wider generalisations.

The next subsection is on the researcher's profile

4.3.3 Researcher profile

I am a female secondary school teacher who trained to teach English. I was born and educated in Zimbabwe, a former British colony in which basic and higher education curricula were and are still influenced by the Global North epistemologies (Gukurume and Maringire 2020). I have taught in schools in various countries in Africa: Zimbabwe, Lesotho and South Africa. My experience as an English secondary school teacher is that the school curricula in those three countries are still influenced by the colonial masters who introduced schooling in these countries. My experiences have made me realise the curriculum challenges which education institutions in formerly colonised countries face even years after gaining political independence.

During my university years as a student in both Zimbabwe and South Africa, I witnessed many students grappling with curriculum content which is mostly foreign to them with few references to their lived experiences as Africans. Some of my former high students who are now enrolled at tertiary education institutions complain of the Western oriented curricula as well as the language barrier experienced during learning.

With such a background, it piqued my interest to undertake a study on perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

In the next subsection, I describe my role as a researcher for the purpose of this study.

4.3.4 The researcher's role

In qualitative research, the role of a researcher is that of being a primary data collection instrument (Creswell 2015; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). In assuming this role I heeded Okesina's (2020) advice to pay attention to the role which the context plays. There is need for reflectivity amongst researchers as they collect data and make inferences and conclusions as they cannot be completely objective (Creswell 2007; Lincoln and Guba 2000). As a student who received her education in postcolonial contexts, I had to distance myself from my own prejudices of my perceptions on decolonising the curriculum to some extent. I explored the issue of decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa as a Zimbabwean citizen studying at a South African university. By acknowledging my positionality as an international student, I was able to bridge the distance and become less of an outsider. Thus I became more acceptable to the study participants.

My role as a research instrument was influenced by ontology, epistemology and methodology which underpin this study. Through a phenomenological approach, the research methodology thus shaped my role as a facilitator during interviews which I used as additional data collection instruments (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). As I conducted telephonic interviews, I facilitated meaning making which in turn linked the experiences of the participants to the theory that I used to underpin the study. Furthermore it was my responsibility as a researcher to appreciate and present the voices of the participants. Familiarity with the institution under study as a postgraduate student assisted in building rapport with the research participants.

The next subsection is a description of the research site for this study.

4.3.5 The research site

The current study explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa, which is UNISA. The research site is one of the oldest and long standing open distance institutions in South Africa. The main campus of the institution where the study was

conducted is in Tshwane, Gauteng province. According to UNISA (2020b:3), the ODeL institution provides higher education to more than 400 000 students from 130 around the world. UNISA's modules are offered through open distance e-learning digital technologies and facilities. In the absence of physical interactions between those who teach and students, the curriculum is delivered to the students through online facilities which bridge the time and location gaps. UNISA consists of nine colleges namely: Education, Law, Human Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Science Engineering and Technology, Graduate Studies and Accounting. According to UNISA (2021), 45 000 students are enrolled for postgraduate studies.

UNISA is among the universities which experienced the 2015-2016 HashTagFeesMustFall and HashTagRhodesMustFall protest movements which affected all South African universities. Among their demands in the protests, students protested against Western orientated curricula in South African universities and called for decolonised curricula. The institution thus is a fertile terrain for research on decolonisation of university curricula. The institution has of late reacted to the students demands by engaging in decolonising and transforming its curricula. The university's latest curriculum framework policy was updated in August 2019 (UNISA 2019a). The adoption of a framework which promotes decolonising curriculum guarantees the appropriateness of the site for the current study.

I am familiar with this higher education institution since I have been a postgraduate student there since 2014 when I started studies for a Bachelor of Education Honours degree. I also completed my Master of Education degree in Curriculum Studies at the institution in 2019. The current study is part of my PhD in Education at the same institution. As such, selection of the site was purposeful and convenient. The selection of the main campus as a research site enabled me to allow the inclusion of participants from different colleges and departments at the institution. Secondly, the institution offers open distance e-learning thus it was easier for me to access senior academics or postgraduate students virtually especially during the Covid-19 pandemic because they are used to online engagements during teaching and learning.

In the next subsection, I describe how I selected the senior academics and postgraduate students who participated in this study.

4.3.6 Selection of participants

One of the greatest challenges in qualitative design is sampling techniques. Unlike quantitative research sampling methods, which draw upon probability and convenience sampling, qualitative research methods require a more purposeful technique of sampling (McMillan 2016). This is a sampling technique which supports a purposive phenomenological case study approach. In line with the theoretical underpinnings of interpretative phenomenological inquiry, the selection of both senior academics and postgraduate students was done by means of purposive sampling. The sampling procedure for the senior academics is provided in the next subsection.

4.3.6.1 Selection of senior academics.

Because I was looking for information rich participants for my study, I purposively sampled sixteen senior academics at UNISA's colleges namely, Education, Human and Social sciences, College of Graduate Studies, Economic and Management Sciences, Business and Leadership and Science and Engineering. I contacted the gatekeepers namely, the Research Permission Subcommittee of the UNISA Senate, Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Degrees and Commercialisation Committee which nominated three senior academics in the College of Education, who in turn suggested various other senior academics from different colleges using the attributes as indicated in the information letters which I provided. That was snowballing or networking sampling in which each successive participant is named by a preceding individual (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). I developed a profile of attributes which the identified participants used as criteria to suggest other participants. It is crucial to note that in such a study, the sample size is dynamic and depends on the availability of participants rather than on representativeness (Creswell 2003).

The goals of this study were to gather and present rich, detailed descriptions of twenty senior academics in different colleges at UNISA and explore their perceptions on

decolonisation of the university curriculum at the institution. However, after asking for their consent to participate in the study, only sixteen senior academics agreed to participate in the study. The minimum inclusion criteria for the senior academics were:

1. Academics who taught postgraduate students prior to the 2015-2016 student protest until the present;
2. Academics who were available and agreed to participate in the study;
1. Full Professors or Associate Professors who are material developers, teachers and assessors of the postgraduate students in the various colleges at the institution;
2. Academics whose work experience at UNISA started before the popular 2015- 2016 student protest movements.

Such a sample is clearly purposive and constrained by the case site, consent and access to participants at the site (cf. 4.3.6.1).

4.3.6.2 Selection of the postgraduate students

Purposive sampling was used to select the postgraduate students who participated in this study. According to Gray (2014), purposive sampling allows the researcher to deliberately select small groups of or individuals who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon being studied. The twelve postgraduate students consisted of six masters and six doctoral students who had the knowledge about decolonisation of curriculum discourses in higher education.

The Research Permission Subcommittee of the UNISA Senate, Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Degrees and Commercialisation Committee nominated two chairpersons in two of the Departments in the College of Education who further nominated master's and doctoral students who had the attributes needed for the purpose of this study. The nominated postgraduate students then suggested to me other postgraduate students who could participate in the study. Upon contacting each of them for consent through myLife, I finally received consent from twelve postgraduate students instead of fifteen whom I initially planned to select. The twelve

postgraduate students were from the following Departments: Social Sciences, Science and Technology, African Languages, Language, Arts and Culture, Social Work, Mathematics Education, Law and Science Engineering and Technology. The minimum inclusion criteria for selection of the twelve postgraduate students were:

1. Being a master's or doctoral student registered for the research component of their studies in any of the colleges at the institution;
2. Having agreed to take part in the study (see 4.3.6).

I entered the world of the students by first contacting them through myLife. Upon getting their agreement to participate in the study, each provided me with his/her cellular phone number which I would use when I contacted the individual semi-structured telephonic interviews. I sampled postgraduate students since they were affected by the curriculum transformation frameworks implemented in response to the student protests of 2015- 2016 (cf. 4.3.6.2).

The next subsection is based on the instruments which I used to collect data for the purpose of this study.

4.3.7 Data collection instruments

The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Presently the university has adopted a new Integrated Transformation Strategy (UNISA 2019a), which seeks to address the decolonising agenda in teaching and learning at the institution. My study was situated within the CRT where the tenets of the tradition advocate methodologies which promote dialogue and social justice (Bell 1980; Ladson-Billings 2013; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). In order to meet such methodological imperatives, I used secondary sources such as journal articles, books, seminal works and legislative framework documents to gather data when I drafted the proposal for this study, for the review of literature and theoretical, philosophical perspectives which shaped the research. Additionally, I employed an online qualitative questionnaire to collect data from sixteen senior

academics and individual semi-structured telephonic interviews to elicit data from the twelve postgraduate students who participated in this study and document analysis as my data gathering instruments. I used the online qualitative questionnaire and individual semi-structured telephonic interviews as COVID-19 compliant methods of data collection (UNISA 2020c). In keeping with demands for the observance of social distancing, the online qualitative questionnaire and virtual interviewing were safe techniques whereby both the researcher and participants remained safe from contracting or spreading the virus during data collection processes (UNISA 2020c).

The data for this study were gathered in three phases, as described below.

4.3.7.1 Phase 1: Document analysis as a data gathering instrument

In this study, I used document analysis as a data gathering instrument. Details about the decolonisation of the university curriculum at the ODeL institution were extracted from such documents as the Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy, Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 Integrated Annual Report; 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy, ODeL Policy; and 2016 Student Funding Policy. I accessed the Vision and Mission Statement from myUnisa, which is the university's official portal for its students and staff. I accessed the 2018 and 2019 annual reports on the UNISA website. The other documents were sent to me by the institution as digital copies through myLife upon my request because they were not available on the institution's website or on myUNISA.

The document analysis provided me with a deeper understanding of the context in which the senior academics and postgraduate students who participated in the study were operating.

My study focused on perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. The study took an interpretive approach in which knowledge or meaning is considered as historically and culturally orientated (Wood, Sebar and Vecchio 2020). As a result the

documents analysed shed light on the historical and cultural context of the university in which the participants in this study operate.

The analysed documents provided insights of the discourses of the decolonisation of the curriculum used at the ODeL institution investigated. I opted for document analysis because documents as resources contain content which illuminates a topic (Bowen 2009), in this case the decolonisation of the university curriculum.

Document analysis is a qualitative method of data collection which entails the systematic review and evaluation of content in the written documents (Bowen 2009). The logic behind such a systematic review and evaluation is to facilitate the examination and interpretation of data to elicit meaning and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen 2009).

The following documents were selected for analysis in this study namely: The Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy, Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 Integrated Annual Report; 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy; 2018 ODeL Policy; and 2016 Student Funding Policy. These documents were selected because of their relevance to the discourse of the decolonisation of higher education or curriculum transformation. I analysed the documents as the first phase of data gathering before administering the online qualitative questionnaire to the sixteen senior academics and conducting the semi-structured telephonic interviews with each of the twelve postgraduate students. The themes which emerged from document analysis guided me and in framing the online qualitative questionnaire and interview questions. Although document analysis is usually used as a primary method of data collection in historical studies, in this study I used it as a complementary data collection method (Bowen 2009; O'Leary 2014). Complementary data collection methods are plausible as they enhance triangulation of data (Gitomer and Crouse 2019; Garces, Marin and Horn 2017).

The next subsection discusses the use of individual semi-structured telephonic interviews as a data gathering instrument which I used.

4.3.7.2 Phase 2: Individual semi-structured telephonic interview as a data gathering instrument

In this study, data were also collected using individual semi-structured telephonic interviews from twelve postgraduate students. Punch (2005) observes that interviews can be unstructured, semi-structured or highly structured. I chose semi-structured telephonic interviews to be compliant with COVID-19 regulations (UNISA 2020c). Semi-structured interviews yielded rich, thick data from the postgraduate students' perceptions on decolonisation of the curriculum at the ODeL institution. The telephonic interviews were conducted outside learning hours to protect students' working time.

This phase of the study included:

1. Meeting online and familiarising myself with the research participants and briefing them about the research goals, methods and consent forms.
2. Transcription of audio-recorded interviews, checking for accuracy with the participants and initial inductive analysis to explore emergent issues and themes.

Individual semi-structured interviews with each of the twelve postgraduate students were conducted. Each interview was thirty minutes long. These interviews were completed over a month. The twelve participating postgraduate students gave consent to the recording of the interviews. Follow up interviews were conducted whenever there was a need to confirm the statements made and there was a need for further clarifications. Smith and Osborn (2007) observe that people usually feel more comfortable in a setting in which they are familiar. As such, upon getting their approval, I interviewed the postgraduate students telephonically after getting consent from them that they were comfortable with the time of the interview. All the participants felt comfortable to be interviewed in the comfort of their homes.

As observed by Gray (2014), if well conducted, the interview can be a powerful instrument to use to elicit rich data on people's views, attitudes and the meanings which corroborates their lives and behaviours. My research was exploratory in nature.

Because of the exploratory nature of the study and to comply with the research protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was therefore justifiable to use the telephonic interview method.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014) indicate that there are three forms of interviews which are:

1. *The informal conversational interview* in which the questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in the natural course of events since there is no predetermination of question topics or phrasing.
2. *The interview guide approach* whereby topics are selected in advance but the researcher decides the sequence and wording of the questions during the interview.
3. *The standardised open ended interview* in which participants are asked the same questions in the same order, thus reducing interview flexibility, naturalness and relevancy of the response.

I chose the interview guide (cf. Appendix F) approach because of its advantage of promoting flexibility in terms of the order in which the topics are considered. Furthermore, this form of interview allowed me to change the wording of the question whenever I realised that the participant had not fully understood it.

In this kind of inquiry, analysis and interpretation of the findings take place simultaneously, that is, during and not only after data collection (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). As a result, each time when need arose, I modified some interview questions during the interview process. I recorded the interviews on a digital recorder upon getting permission and made extensive field notes during the interview processes. Interviews serve to gather information regarding an individual's experiences and knowledge, their opinions, beliefs, and demographics (Creswell 2007; McMillan and Schumacher 2014; cf. 5.3). Patton (2002) succinctly describes the primary purpose of interviewing participants as allowing the researcher to enter into the world of the other person's perspective, and cautions that research methods such as observation and document analysis do not totally enable the researcher to

understand a participant's emotions, feelings, beliefs or thoughts. In this study, the interview was used as one of the primary data gathering instruments, apart from the online qualitative questionnaire.

In the next subsection, I describe the online qualitative questionnaire as a data gathering instrument.

4.3.7.3 Phase 3: Online qualitative questionnaire as a data gathering instrument

I used the online qualitative questionnaire (cf. Appendix G) as an instrument to collect data from the sixteen senior academics who participated in this study. Open ended questionnaires were used to cater for senior academics' schedules, who at the time of the research were working from home due to the lockdown regulations. It was therefore not possible to meet with them and to have personal interviews with them. I distributed the online qualitative questionnaires during the time when South Africa was at alert level 5 (UNISA 2020c). At alert level 5, higher education in the country was observing total shutdown; only essential services were allowed at campus. Because of that, and taking further advice on how to conduct research at high COVID-19 alert level, I chose the online qualitative questionnaire which is aligned to the institution's COVID-19 guidelines (UNISA 2020c). Thus, the online qualitative questionnaire was used as a COVID-19 way of data gathering as it posed no risk of spreading or contracting the COVID-19 virus to either the researcher or participants.

Qualitative questionnaires ask open ended questions which are meant to elicit the participants' comments, opinions, perceptions, experiences and suggestions about a phenomenon being investigated (Eckerdal and Hagstrom 2017). The participants respond to the open ended questions by writing their answers below each question and the researcher will not be actively present either virtually or physically during the response process. The qualitative questionnaire as a data gathering instrument is originally an ethnographic method of collecting information about everyday life, hence it consists of memories, opinions and experiences of participants. The strength of

using a qualitative questionnaire to gather data is that it provides rich insights of people's experiences of a phenomenon under investigation.

I sent emails to various senior academics in various Colleges at the institution asking for their consent to participate in this study. Although my original plan was to have a sample of twenty senior academics, only sixteen of them agreed to participate in the study. In my initial email to them I included details about the aim and nature of the study as well as my plans to adhere to ethical considerations. After receiving their consent to participate in the study, I emailed each of them the questionnaire requesting them to respond to the questions asked. Most senior academics were able to provide me with responses within the first two weeks of distribution.

The next section details the three phases of data analysis in the study.

4.3.8 Data analysis

The subsections which follow describe the three phases in which I analysed the data collected from documents, individual semi-structured telephonic interviews and online qualitative questionnaires respectively.

4.3.8.1 Phase 1: Analysis of documents

I used qualitative document analysis as one of the three data gathering methods in this research study. In order to understand the holistic perceptions of the senior academics and postgraduate students and the context in which the perceptions are produced, I analysed critical documents related to decolonisation and transformation of curriculum at the ODeL institution as mentioned earlier: Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy; Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 Integrated Annual Report; 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy, ODeL Policy; and 2016 Student Funding Policy. These documents provided information about UNISA context which I might not have known without consulting these documents. I was guided by the research question for this study which is: What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university

curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa? The literature reviewed for the purpose of this study on decolonisation in various higher education settings and in particular South African context was also helpful in providing a broader context in which UNISA is operating in the development and adoption of guiding principles on decolonisation and transformation of its curriculum. I used Merriam's (1998) criteria to determine which documents should be included in this thesis. Merriam (1998) explains that for a document to be included and analysed, it should have insights which are relevant to the research questions and can be acquired in a reasonably practical systematic way. Thus I analysed several useful documents to deepen my understanding of the context of my study findings.

After reviewing each document a few times, I recorded notes on the elements which seemed most appropriate to the research questions to address the following:

1. Authorship and intended audience
2. The function of the document
3. Content and meaning
4. Intertextuality and authority
5. Language and form of the document.

I coded the recorded notes according to the themes which emerged (Merriam 2013). The period of intense review and coding was followed by the creation of categories of the theme. I then did a lot of re-reading until a hierarchy of themes emerged. Subsequently, I used selective coding to determine which details from the data are most relevant to my study. Three themes namely conceptualisation of transformation at UNISA, operationalisation of the transformation agenda at UNISA and challenges in the implementation of transformation agenda at UNISA emerged and were presented, interpreted and discussed (cf. 5.2.1; 5.2.2; 5.2.3). I then triangulated the data from the document analysis, online qualitative questionnaire and individual semi-structured telephonic interviews to increase credibility of the findings (Corbin and Strauss 2008; Creswell 2014). The themes which emerged from the document analysis guided me to frame the questions for the interviews and online qualitative questionnaire.

The next subsection describes the analysis of individual semi-structured telephonic interview data.

4.3.8.2 Phase 2: Analysis of individual semi-structured telephonic interview data

To analyse the data which I gathered from individual semi-structured telephonic interviews, I used the four part analytical process of Smith, Flower and Larkin (2009). The first step of the process involved the transcription of the data I gathered from the individual telephonic semi-structured interviews with the twelve postgraduate students. Gray (2014) emphasises that transcription is a vital part of the research process. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) describe transcription as the process of taking notes and information from the recordings and converting them into a format which facilitates analysis. In other words, the transcription prepares the data for visual review. Because I was interested in the implied meanings of the data gathered, I transcribed the interview data verbatim by typing them. I transcribed the raw data and at the same time examined what I had recorded in my reflective journal during the data gathering stages, in order to deeply engage myself with the data. The following steps were followed during data analysis:

During the initial step, I immersed myself in the audio transcriptions from the participants' individual semi-structured telephonic interviews. During the reading and rereading stage, I only considered each participant's transcript at a time before moving on to the next participant to enable myself to enter the participant's world and interpret his or her experiences. I also engaged in reading and re-reading of the transcript in line with Yin (2009) that the researcher has to go through the data several times as a way of ensuring that the interpretation suits the data. I ensured that I listened to audio recordings to allow the participants' tones, emotions, and nuances to be connected to the transcription. The limitation of the telephonic interview was that I could not see the participants' non-verbal clues such as facial expression and gestures. By adding the audio recording to my immersion of reading through transcripts, I was able to understand and interpret the participants' data in a better way. Smith and Osborn (2007:67) agree with this decision, arguing that qualitative data analysis is "a personal

process and the analysis itself is the interpretive work the investigator does at each of the stages.” At this level, I used analytic memos which included initial perceptions, thoughts, reflections, and identification, notes, comments or any other surprising matters which occurred during the data analysis (Cohen et al. 2011). Memoing helped me in the process of reflectivity.

The second step was initial coding during which I analysed lines of the transcriptions. Mashall and Rossman (2006) view coding as the representation of analytical thinking whereby generating categories and themes constitute the tough intellectual work of analysis. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) simplify the definition of coding by explaining it as the identifying of small pieces of data that stand alone as segments, whereby a segment is a text that is comprehensible by itself and contains one main idea. Because coding is not merely a technical task as warned by Gray (2014), as I coded the data, new meanings and understandings would sometimes emerge, making it necessary to adjust my original plan. Taking advice from Corbin and Strauss (2008), I started the coding of data immediately after the first interview since the data from the interview served as a foundation for data collection and analysis. The segments or codes of data were based on the broad research question: What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?

After that, I specified codes for the data that appeared meaningful. I distinguished the codes in categories identified by Smith et al. (2009) as follows:

1. *Descriptive*, where the researcher identifies of key topics and phrases and explanations of the interview subject.
2. *Linguistic*, in which the researcher attempts to put meaning behind words and participants’ use of language.
3. *Conceptual*, where the researcher identifies preliminary concepts and themes that begin to describe participants’ experiences with the phenomenon. In doing all this, the aim was to find participants’ expressions that can be identified as theoretical connections within and across cases (Smith and Osborn 2007).

In the third step of the process I developed emergent themes and searched for connections among possible themes from my interpretation of data from all twenty-eight participants. As themes emerged, I emphasised the data that I had coded rather than the verbatim transcription of participants' interviews. Smith et al. (2009) point out that those themes are forms of iterative analysis and involve a close interaction between the reader and the text.

In the last step of my data analysis, I searched for connections across emergent themes. During this phase, I used the coded data to generate my overall analysis. I inspected the coded data to find out patterns or connections evident among the data. After that I recorded and entered all the themes from the coded data and started to formulate them into logical groupings. Each grouping received a particular name with indications of my interpretation of the overall theme. Field notes that I made during the reading of the interviews transcripts were analysed in the same way as the audio recording transcriptions. Thus, in short, I read and re-read all data transcripts from audio records and field notes, then discussed them in relation to findings from document analysis and literature. The findings of the data are presented and discussed in the next chapter of this study.

4.3.8.3 Phase 3: Analysis of online qualitative questionnaire data

I used thematic analysis to analyse the online qualitative questionnaire data which I gathered from the sixteen senior academics who participated in this study. I analysed the data manually on Microsoft Word. My analysis included the six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The phases are: gaining familiarity with the data in the questionnaires, generation of initial codes, search for themes from the coded data, reviewing themes, defining and naming of themes and finally presenting and discussing the findings. The data were based on the broad research question: What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?

In order to familiarize myself with the data, I read and re-read the questionnaire responses to get the exact meaning as intended by the participant (Baun and Clarke 2006; Check and Schutt 2012). The challenge I encountered was that some

participants provided short answers instead of a detailed discussions. In instances where further clarification was needed, I followed up on the respective participants through myLife email for elaboration, which they provided. After familiarisation with the data, I noted meaningful data; recurring ideas and codes in form of phrases which represented significant data (cf. 4. 4). Thus, in analysing the data, I had the task to reduce, present and interpret the significant data as empirical findings (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2).

The next section discusses the trustworthiness of the data.

4.3.9 Trustworthiness of the data

According to Mc Millan Schumacher (2014:354), trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to “the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher.” This section is discussed under the following headings: audit trail, study credibility, study dependability, member checking, study transferability and triangulation.

4.3.9.1 Audit trail

Audit trail refers to a detailed chronology of research activities and processes, the influences on the data and data analysis (Anney 2014; Li 2004; Morrow 2005). I kept this information in my research journal. The raw data from interviews, qualitative questionnaire data and document analysis were kept in a journal for cross referencing purposes. Morrow (2005) asserts that if the events in a research study are audited and the influences of the research are accounted for, then the research study is considered as confirmable. Anney, (2014), notes that confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of an inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers. Confirmability concerns the establishment of whether data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the researcher’s imagination but clearly derived from the data (Anney 2014). Therefore, any interested researcher will be able to access the data evidence from my research journal at any point after the completion of this study.

4.3.9.2 Study credibility

Anney (2014) defines credibility as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. I established rigour of the inquiry by immersing myself in the participants' world. This helped me to gain an insight into the context of the study (Anney 2014; Bitsch 2005). Given the methodology and research design and the interpretivist epistemology, the credibility of the study was demonstrated through the use of quotes from the online qualitative questionnaire and individual semi-structured telephonic interviews. All interpretations and inferences that I made from the data were based on the chain of evidence presented. Subsequently, such an engagement helped minimise the distortions of information that could arise due to my presence in the field. I sought support from other professionals who were willing to provide scholarly guidance. Above all, I always consulted my supervisor on comments and feedback in order to achieve credibility of this study.

4.9.1.3 Study dependability

In qualitative research, dependability of the results is a critical concern. This concept, which is known as reliability in quantitative research, refers to the extent to which a study could be replicated (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). Dependability deals on the manner in which the study is conducted, consistency and the techniques which researchers use to analyse data (Gasson 2004: 94). According to Gray (2014), dependability is determined by a properly managed audit. As pointed out by Brock-Utne (1996), audit management aims at recording the multiple interpretations of intention and meanings of given situations and events. I provided evidence of data by keeping audio data from interviews. I also kept the written notes which I took while reading the qualitative questionnaire responses, during the individual telephonic interviews and document analysis. In this study, I described the research design and methods in detail so that it may be possible to replicate this study. Some difference may however be noticeable depending on the researcher's different interpretation and analysis of data (Gray 2014). It should also be noted that with a different paradigm from the one I used in this study, different inferences and assertions may be made from the same data (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). Thus, as suggested by Lincoln

and Guba (1985), in an interpretative case study, consideration should be given to the dependability of the results. In other words, it is a question of whether, with the given data, the study results make sense. This consideration guided my analysis. Above all, during the data collection and analysis processes, I frequently contacted my research supervisor for advice.

4.9.1.4 Member checking

Member checking was used with individual semi-structured telephonic interviews and the online qualitative questionnaire to enhance credibility of the data gathered from the participants. It involved the verification of data with the research participants (Creswell 2007; Lincoln and Guba 1985). The process allowed the participants opportunities to review both the data collected that they had provided in individual semi-structured telephonic interviews, online qualitative questionnaires and my interpretation of them to see if there were any changes made to them. Additionally, Anney (2014) observes that member checking is conducted to eliminate researchers' bias when analysing and interpreting the results. In this study, after analysing individual semi-structured telephonic interview and online qualitative questionnaire data, I went back to the postgraduate students and senior academics to conduct a member check with them. This was a useful tool for credibility since participants are usually appreciative of the member checking process, (Creswell 2014) and they were given platforms to correct errors. In other words, by verifying their statements, they willingly filled gaps created in their responses. I benefited from that by checking my own subjectivity and ensured trustworthiness of my findings in the study.

4.9.1.5 Study transferability

External validity is concerned with the extent to which results can be generalised from this study (Gray 2014). In a qualitative study, the term transferability is used instead (McMillan and Schumacher 2014). The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

I communicated findings through thick rich descriptions based on the mechanically recorded data through audio recorders and detailed verbatim field notes. The unique voices of senior academic and postgraduate student participants were at the core of my research and will allow further researchers to determine transferability of findings to other settings, (Creswell 2014). I provided an accurate portrayal of how academics and students perceive the decolonisation of the university curriculum. A detailed description of the research sites, the data collection methods used and data analysis enable researchers to apply the findings in similar settings

4.9.1.6 Triangulation

Triangulation involves the use of different methods, sources and theories to obtain corroborating evidence (Anney 2014). I used data triangulation and participant triangulation. Data triangulation uses different sources of data methods, such as individual semi- structured telephonic interviews, online qualitative questionnaires and document analysed data to enhance the quality of the data from different sources. Getting data from different types of participants and using different data collection methods assisted in reducing biases. Thus I was able to cross examine the integrity of participants' responses (Anney 2014).

The next section is about ethical consideration for this study.

4.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

McMillan and Schumacher (2014) advise that because most educational research deals with people, it is a necessity for researchers to understand the ethical responsibilities and considerations to which they have to adhere.

Before the formal commencement of the study, I obtained ethical clearance from the College of Education Ethical Committee. (cf. Appendix J). I was also provided with the gatekeepers' letter from the University Ethics Committee which granted me permission to conduct research using both academics and postgraduate students of the institution as research participants and to access the relevant documents for analysis (cf.

Appendix E). The following characteristics were included in my consent forms to all prospective participants:

1. the purpose of the research;
2. what is expected of the participant;
3. voluntary participation;
4. steps to maintain confidentiality; and
5. contact information of local ethics committee chairperson.

The above noted features were important should participants have any questions regarding the ethics of the study. Before I engaged in any form of field work, all the research participants, that is, the sixteen senior academics and twelve postgraduate students, were asked to complete the written consent forms after I fully informed them about the research, its aims, design, data collection, data analysis and the measures which I used to protect anonymity and confidentiality. I also clarified that each participant should understand that they might withdraw from the study at any time, without experiencing any negative consequences. However, throughout the data collection phases, no participant withdrew from participating in the study. I worked in a professional manner in accordance with the key values of UNISA. Creswell (2014: 132) advises that it is the role of a researcher to plan for potential ethical situations that may evolve when the researcher must gain entry to the field site of the research; involve participants in a study; gather personal, emotional data that reveal the details of life; and ask participants to give considerable time to a project. Thus I treated all the participants with respect and observed the safety of all participants to ensure that they would not be harmed by any unethical or dangerous actions throughout the process in any way.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) and McMillan and Schumacher (2014), point out the necessity to protect participant confidentiality when conducting research. In order to protect the confidentiality of the twenty-eight participants in my study, I used pseudonyms for each one of them. Further, I undertook to keep the data collected safe on a password locked computer in a secure office for a period of five years.

4.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the research design methods. The first section of the chapter discussed the rationale for the qualitative research framework and the corresponding research paradigms. A discussion of the study's design included details about the setting; sampling technique and procedures; and a description of the setting and participants. Furthermore, data collection and analysis procedures were highlighted. Lastly, a discussion on how the credibility of the results was ensured was provided. Further discussed in the last section of this chapter are ethical considerations adhered to during empirical data collection as well as the study's limitations. The next chapter will present the findings from empirical investigations as well as the discussions of these findings.

In the next chapter, a presentation and discussion of the data findings are provided.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the research design, approach and methodology used in this study. This chapter presents findings from empirical data collected through qualitative document analysis, semi-structured individual telephonic interviews with postgraduate students and an online qualitative questionnaire from senior academics respectively. The findings from these three data gathering methods provide empirical evidence on perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students towards the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

5.2 FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

I used qualitative document analysis as one of the three data analysis methods in this research study. I used thematic content analysis to analyse the documents which I sampled from the ODeL institution namely: Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy, Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 Integrated Annual Report; 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy; ODeL Policy; and Student Funding Policy.

In Table 5.1 below, I present a brief overview of the features which I analysed in each of these documents.

Table 5.1 Document features analysed

Name of document	Date	Authors	Type of document	Audience	Function of document
Integrated Transformation Strategy	2019	Prepared by the Department of Leadership and Transformation	Official policy framework	Staff, students, UNISA Council and Senate, DHET and the public	Outlines specific ways in which transformation of curriculum is to be realised
UNISA 2030 Strategy	2020	Not specified	Official	Staff, students and the public	Outlines UNISA's aspirations to transform the institution by 2030
Vision and Mission Statement	Modified 20 April 2020	Not specified	Official	Staff, students and public	Outlines the core values and principles of the institution
2018 Integrated Annual Report	2018	Not specific	Official	Students, staff, university Council and Senate, DHET, other stakeholders	Institutional annual report for the year 2018
2019 Integrated Annual Report	2019	Not specific	official	Students, staff, university Council and Senate, DHET, other stakeholders	Institutional annual report for the year 2019

2016 UNISA Language Policy	2016	Not specified	Official	Staff and public	It outlines the languages that should be used for teaching and learning as well as for communication in the university contexts.
2018 Open Distance eLearning Policy	2018	Not specified	Official	Staff, students and public	Provides guidelines on ODeL processes and practices
2016 Student funding policy	2016		Official	Students, staff, funders and public	Provides an outline of the types of funding, conditions and criteria used for funding students

Table 5.1 provides a summary of identified documents which I purposively selected for analysis for the purpose of this study. The summary highlights the names of the documents selected for analysis, date of publication and authorship, purpose of these documents and their intended audience. The authenticity of these documents is guaranteed. I accessed the Vision and Mission Statement from myUnisa, which is the university's official portal for its students and staff. The other documents were received from the institution as digital copies through myLife upon request. myLife is the official email communication channel which is used for communications between students and the university. Details of the sampling of the documents were provided in chapter four (cf. 4.3.8.1).

The thematic content analysis which I used is a method of analysing documents in which the following steps are taken;

1. Creation of code frames or themes;
2. Selection of relevant excerpts from the document;

3. Assigning the themes relevant to excerpts found in the document (Adu 2019).

Following Adu's (2019) thematic content analysis steps, I developed the following themes from the coded categories of data from the documents that I analysed:

- a) Conceptualisation of transformation at the institution;
- b) Operationalising the transformational agenda;
- c) Challenges faced in the implementation of transformation agenda.

In the following sections, I present the findings in accordance with the identified themes. After presenting each of these themes, they are discussed through the CRT lens discussed in chapter two (cf. 2.3) as a framework which undergirds this study. I further weave in the related literature discussed in chapter three of this study. It is important to highlight from the onset that I used the data from document analysis to provide a context in which senior academics and postgraduate students who participated in this study operate. I triangulated findings from document analysis with findings from individual semi-structured telephonic interviews and online qualitative questionnaires. However, interviews and questionnaires were the primary data gathering methods in this study.

5.2.1 Conceptualisation of transformation at UNISA

The conceptualisation of transformation is revealed in the following documents: Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy, Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 Integrated Annual Report; 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy; ODeL Policy; and Student funding policy I analysed how transformation is conceptualised in each these stated documents.

The concept of transformation is explicit in UNISA's Integrated Transformation Strategy of 2019. UNISA's Integrated Transformation Strategy which was updated in August 2019 is one of the policy frameworks which details the transformation agenda at this ODeL institution (UNISA 2019a). As expressed in this document, UNISA

understands the definition of transformation as multi-dimensional and contested. While acknowledging an array of definitions of transformation, the document centres the institution's understanding of the concepts as follows:

1. *“Transformation is a comprehensive, deep- rooted process of eradicating all kinds of unfair discrimination”* (UNISA 2019a:4).
2. *Transformation refers to decolonizing, deracializing, demasculinizing and engendering the university, engaging with epistemological and ontological issues and their implications for scholarship, teaching, learning, curriculum and pedagogy”* (UNISA 2019a:5).

The Integrated Transformation Strategy framework further clarifies that UNISA perceives a correlation between transformation and decolonisation. Thus UNISA's transformation focuses on challenging the notion of the geopolitics of knowledge as objectively Eurocentric. Other knowledges from other parts of the world are treated as subjective and recipients of Eurocentric knowledge as passive participants in knowledge production (UNISA 2019a). UNISA positions itself as an institution which aims to centre African knowledges as valid, while knowledges from other parts of the world will be recognised where applicable (UNISA 2019a).

Thus, by challenging *Eurocentrism* in an African university curriculum, the Integrated Transformation Strategy serves to highlight the aim of decolonisation and/or transformation at the institution as provincialising Western knowledge systems. By provincialising Western epistemologies, the institution seeks to centre Africa in its curriculum content (UNISA 2019a). The use of the word provincialising is significant because a province is part of a whole. Thus, the institution understands Western knowledge as only a part of, or a fraction of a whole. Therefore, Western knowledges are important in as far as they are relevant to the African ways of knowing and thinking. I argue that there is a close link between provincialisation of Western knowledges and CRT. Western knowledges are provincialised by centring African content and other non-African knowledges in the curriculum, thereby delinking and critiquing the myth of universalising Western knowledges (Delgado and Stefancic 2017; Mignolo 2011). I further assert that placing African content at the centre while recognizing other

knowledges is an act which aims at eradicating epistemological racism from the institution's curriculum

The Integrated Transformation Strategy of 2019 clarifies that transformation at UNISA is framed on eight dimensions and five pillars. The eight dimensions are as follows:

1. staff equity, development and work experience;
2. student equity, development and achievement;
3. student and learning experiences in an ODeL environment;
4. knowledge, epistemology and language;
5. governance, leadership and management;
6. institutional culture and social inclusion;
7. funding and resource allocation, infrastructure including buildings, facilities and ICTs (UNISA 2019a).

The five pillars are as follows:

1. transforming epistemology;
2. knowledge and scholarship;
3. changing institutional cultures, rethinking systems and policies;
4. rethinking governance, leadership and management in higher education; and
5. promoting discourse of change (UNISA 2019a).

However, it is important to note that the Integrated Transformation Strategy emphasises that centring Africa in the curriculum should not be simply understood as a total replacement of the Global North or Western epistemology (UNISA 2019a). Instead, the needs of the twenty-first century students and academics should be considered to ensure that the best of African, Latin and Asian perspectives are integrated into curriculum offerings (UNISA 2019a).

The Integrated Transformation Strategy highlights that the decolonisation agenda at UNISA is not an overnight project since it is *“a complex process about re- humanising a system whose real potential remains inhibited by decades of coloniality, racism,*

patriarchy and class exclusion” (UNISA 2019a: 6). Thus, decolonisation is a complicated ongoing process which will take time to yield the desired results of transforming the institution. The same sentiments are echoed by Chikoko (2021), Jansen (2017), Mbembe(2017), and Mashiyi, Meda and Swart (2020) who also allude to the fact that the decolonisation of the curriculum is a long term project which requires time and constant monitoring and evaluation.

Another critical document which was analysed for the purpose of this study is UNISA’s 2016 language policy. At face value, the UNISA language policy is not explicit about transformation as a concept. However, the policy is a significant indicator of the transformation process which is taking place at institutional level. The 2016 UNISA language policy was adopted to promote the use of South African languages to scaffold learning (UNISA 2016a). By implication, the 2016 language policy gives effect to the transformation agenda (Moropa 2021). The 2016 UNISA’s language policy aims at ensuring that all South African students receive an equal learning opportunity by providing them tuition support using their various first languages (L1’s) in an ODeL context. Thus, the policy seeks to transform teaching and learning at the institution to achieve linguistic and cultural harmony amongst the students and staff.

The preamble of the 2016 language policy states that it was adopted to fulfill the constitutional obligation which stipulates that all languages should enjoy equal parity of esteem (UNISA 2016a). The adoption of the 2016 language policy was a move by the university to align its language policy with the Use of the Official Languages Act of 2012 (UNISA 2016a). The other reason for adopting the 2016 language policy was to provide language support to all South African students studying at UNISA to enhance their academic success (UNISA 2016a). However, the language policy emphasises the importance of the use of and development of all the South African official languages to scaffold learning, while English will be used as the primary medium of instruction at all levels (UNISA 2016a).

The Unisa language policy also emphasises the importance of translating examination papers into various African languages as well as compiling glossaries in the nine official indigenous languages (UNISA 2016a). These transformational developments

were put in place as steps towards the fulfillment of UNISA's 2030 strategic plan, to transform teaching, learning research and community engagement in order for UNISA to be a leading ODeL institution (Moropa 2021).

UNISA 2016 language policy provides an initiative for providing student support through home language based multilingual education (UNISA 2016a). The use of indigenous African languages is aimed at enhancing students' academic success. Section 4.4.1 articulates thus:

“All formal study material, formative and summative assessment, as well as other formal tuition activities will be in English, whereas learner support activities may be in the language of the student”(UNISA 2016a:4).

Section 4.4.2 of the 2016 language policy, states that UNISA strives to support its students in their home languages by phasing in:

- a) “compulsory multilingual glossaries in all eleven official languages.
- b) translation support for basic understanding in all eleven official languages.
- c) learning objects in various languages as scaffolding and supporting tools .
- d) tutorial support materials to be offered in all the South African official languages” (UNISA 2016a: 4).

I understand the introduction of compulsory multilingual glossaries, translation of learning and tutorial support materials, the use of various learning objects in nine previously marginalised indigenous South African languages as UNISA's affirmation of its commitment to abide by the constitutional requirements which recognise and guarantee previously marginalised languages as official languages to be used as official languages throughout the schooling system (RSA 1996). The glossaries are intended to broaden the students' scope of understanding technical terms and discipline specific vocabulary (Moropa 2021). I regard the use of South African indigenous languages in tutorial support materials as a means to transform the university curriculum. However, evaluation of research methods used to conduct research still appear to be mainly Eurocentric in nature. The idea of centring Africa in

the institution's curriculum is clearly articulated in the language policy of the institution through the adoption of multilingualism which includes translation of support materials provided to students through myUnisa. The promotion and acknowledgement of multilingualism assist in elevating the status of indigenous languages which had limited space within academic institutions and the South African education system in general (UNISA 2016a).

Although the language policy seeks to promote multilingualism in teaching and learning, I am of the opinion that the promotion of South African indigenous languages benefits local students while disadvantaging international students. However the use of these languages will not only enhance their status but also their development into scientific languages. Recently, there has been a new development in relation to the 2016 language policy in use. On 22 September 2021, the South African Constitutional court instructed UNISA to accommodate Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. This followed the suspension of the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction alongside with English as a result of the Hash Tag FeesMust Fall movement, which demanded the use of English as a sole medium of instruction until such time that African languages were introduced as media of instruction in higher education.

UNISA's understanding of curriculum transformation is also expressed in its Vision and Mission Statement. The introduction sentence of the Vision and Mission Statement reads:

“At Unisa, our vision, mission and values is to unite our diverse culture while guiding us in our decision making and strategic planning” (UNISA 2020a:1).

The above excerpt from the Vision and Mission Statement emphasises working as a collective in transforming the institution. Thus, the aim of centring Africa with its linguistic and cultural diversity in the institution's services could only be achieved if all its employees work together. The use and repetition of the concept “our” in the above quote illuminates the idea of the collective. The Vision Statement of the university reads:

“Towards the African university shaping futures in the service of humanity”
(UNISA 2020a: 1).

A vision statement is an expression of the aims and objectives of an institution. In other words, the statement reflects the future mental image of the institution. *“Towards the African university shaping futures in the service of humanity”* shows the ODeL institution’s emphasis and aspiration to centre Africa in its services. Thus, the institution gives itself an obligation to serve all countries within the African continent as one of its core aims. This aspiration is validated as UNISA has established offices in most of the African countries’ capital cities (UNISA 2017; 2019b). Furthermore, UNISA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other African countries to allow their students access to the institution (UNISA 2017). Additionally, UNISA seeks collaborations with various universities both nationally and internationally in order to meet its academic agenda. By centring Africa, the vision highlights its agenda of Africanising the institution as one of its core obligations.

The Mission Statement captures the realisation of the vision through;

1. *“Producing excellent scholarship and research*
2. *Student centered approaches*
3. *Nurturing critical thinking in its students*
4. *Promoting global sustainability”* (UNISA 2020a: 1).

The bullet points above reflect the principle which guides UNISA in realising its vision. I applaud UNISA’s positioning of itself as an institution which produces excellent scholarship. The yardstick to measure excellent scholarship is evident in the Integrated Transformation Strategy which advocates for transformation which is attuned to the country’s national development goals (UNISA 2019a). The transformation agenda is implemented in a context in which UNISA espouses student centered approaches to teaching and learning. The last bullet point above indicates that those aspirations of the institution should be realised in the context in which global sustainability is enhanced. By seeking to meet the global agenda of sustainability, it

shows that as an ODeL institution, UNISA is a site of neoliberal trends. In this context, UNISA is subscribing to the neoliberal, global hegemonic mechanism in which it responds to the demands of global capitalism to produce graduates who will contribute to the global economy (cf. 3.4.4).

The Mission Statement ends with an emphasis on the need to nurture global sustainability, as shown in the excerpt above. The global imperative may, to some extent, defeat the whole purpose of centring Africa in the curriculum. If the global expectations are to be met, then centring Africa may be very difficult to achieve because Africa is part of the global village which is currently controlled and hegemonised by the Global North or Western supremacist ideologies as far as knowledge systems are concerned (Koopman 2019). Consequently, Africa may not be considered as truly independent to centre itself in the curricula of its education systems which seek to promote global sustainability, not just continental sustainability (Jansen 2017; Lange 2017).

Another document which describes UNISA's transformation agenda is the 2018 ODeL Policy. The purpose of the ODeL policy is to provide guidelines on ODeL processes and practices to promote UNISA as a leading ODeL university at national, continental and international levels within a blended teaching and learning model (UNISA 2018b: 1). The purpose of the ODeL policy is closely aligned to the institution's 2030 Strategic Plan in which UNISA sets itself to be "*the African university shaping futures in serving humanity*" (UNISA 2018a: 1). The ODeL 2018 policy also commits UNISA to a continuous process of curriculum transformation and pedagogical innovations (UNISA 2018a). In committing itself to continuous curriculum transformation and pedagogical innovation, UNISA espouses the values of the right to human dignity, respect of diversity for attainment of equality, social justice and freedom of expression as promulgated in the Constitution of South Africa (RSA1996). The right to dignity and respect of diversity are important values since as an ODeL institution, UNISA's student population are from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Greyling, Huntley, Reedy and Rotagen 2020; UNISA 2020b). Furthermore, the university admits both local and international students.

The continuous pedagogical innovation which UNISA strives for seeks to promote renewal in teaching and learning in ODeL contexts (Mendy 2018; Mendy and Madiope 2020). To clarify how UNISA promotes renewal in teaching and learning I provide a snapshot of UNISA's ODeL framework. The framework is premised on the assumption that UNISA's students can be supported in their learning using modern digital technologies (Ngubane-Mokiwa 2017:113). The use of digital facilities such as video conferencing, discussion forums, TEAMS and ZOOMS are being used to facilitate dialogue and discussion spaces for peer to peer assessment and critical skills amongst students (Ngubane-Mokiwa 2017: 113; Letseka, Letseka and Pitsoe 2018). These technologies promote eLearning and as such it bridges both the distance between students and the academics. Using these technologies students' academic success is enhanced and collaborative learning is promoted.

Another purpose of the ODeL policy as outlined in section 2.4 is to commit UNISA to continuous responsive interaction with emerging national and international imperatives with regard to the quality ODeL provisioning (UNISA 2018a). UNISA's commitment to emerging national and international imperatives is also evident in its documents such as the Integrated Transformation Strategy (UNISA 2019a) and Mission and Vision Statement (UNISA 2020a) discussed above. I believe that continuous reference to the need to meet global imperatives in UNISA's transformation policy frameworks illuminates that curriculum transformation is a global challenge.

The transformation agenda at UNISA also seeks to promote equity access to education through the institution's financial assistance to students. The guiding principles in funding students are promulgated in the Student Funding Policy which was revised and approved by UNISA Council on 11 November 2016 (UNISA 2016b). The 2016 Student funding policy is a four page document. The policy outlines the conditions which UNISA considers in providing financial assistance to its students. It states:

1. *"The institution will offer financial assistance on the grounds of academic merit, financial need of the student and specific requirements set by the donors.*

2. *No academically deserving and financially needy South African student is prohibited from studying at UNISA due to financial challenges as far as it is financially possible and meeting the donor criteria” (UNISA 2016b:1).*

Paragraph 1.4 outlines that the financial assistance offered to students will cover expenses such as tuition fees, purchase of prescribed textbooks, assistive devices for students with disabilities and research expenses (UNISA 2016b).

The policy clarifies the types of financial support which are available to students which are managed and administered by the student funding in the Finance Department. These are:

- a) donor bursaries;
- b) merit awards;
- c) National Student Aid Scheme (NASFAS);
- d) UNISA bursaries;
- e) external donors (UNISA 2016b).

The guiding principles in granting financial assistance or support to students include equity, support for economically disadvantaged students and donor agreed expectations and criteria (UNISA2016b). Financial assistance offered to students from disadvantaged backgrounds form part of the transformation agenda. It promotes access to university education to those students who were previously excluded due financial constraints. Through financial assistance, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are accorded an opportunity to access higher education. This in turn assists them in securing jobs and thus contributes to social and economic development at both societal and national levels.

In conclusion, the documents analysed in this section illuminates that as an ODeL institution, UNISA conceptualises transformation as an extensive, deep rooted, ongoing process of eliminating all forms of discrimination. UNISA commits its academic staff to centre Africa in the scholarship of teaching and learning, research and all curriculum processes to promote social justice and equity in access to

education and knowledge production. UNISA uses an ODeL model which promotes access to education through digital technological facilities. It is important to highlight that amongst several other documents centred on transformation, the ones analysed for the purpose of this study were the documents which I was able to access. However, there are other policy documents which were left out as the aim of document analysis was to situate the study in context. I believe the analysed documents are representative of the most important policy documents at the institution that these policies are viable and as such they could be implemented. However, I believe although as highlighted previously the implementation of the transformation agenda cannot be achieved overnight, it is important to have time frames and a monitoring process in place to ensure that goals are met. The implementation and monitoring process are not evident in these documents.

The next section is on an analysis of documents which highlight the operationalisation of the transformation agenda at UNISA.

5.2.2 Operationalising the transformational agenda at UNISA

An analysis of the sampled documents revealed the operationalisation of the transformation agenda at UNISA. In this study, the operationalisation of the transformation agenda is understood as referring to the implementation of curriculum transformation at UNISA.

The 2018 Annual Report excerpt below demonstrates the operationalisation of the transformation agenda:

“There is an ongoing work of the establishment of a School of Languages whose aim is to integrate and develop official languages and other non-official languages offered by the university” (UNISA 2018b: 121).

Although the establishment of a School of Languages is not yet realised, thinking about such an establishment shows evidence of plans to realise such a dream. The Language Policy statement (cf. UNISA 2016a, section 6.1) states that the

implementation of the language framework will be a responsibility of a special language unit to be established. This language unit has since been established to oversee the implementation of the language policy framework as is required by the Language Policy Framework for Higher Education Policy (DHET 2020). It can thus be said that UNISA is abiding by the Language Policy Framework for Higher Education Policy. Furthermore, UNISA has established a Senate Language Committee which reports on language policy implementation endeavours at college levels. Each college reports on its language policy implementation measures quarterly; such reporting provides an overview of the implementation process at university level.

The 2018 Annual Report also affirms that in terms of leadership and management:

“...there is now a Vice Principal for Institutional Development and Transformation which oversees the development of change and transformation plans and instruments which includes: The Institutional Transformational Plan, Change Management Strategy and Roll-out of the Unisa service Charter which would be piloted in 2019” (UNISA 2018b:121).

The following excerpt from the 2018 Annual Report attests to active decolonisation of the institutional cultures:

“During February – May 2018, the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRSC) was invited by the university to assist with complex issues of racism, sexism and bullying. The SAHRC engaged in three investigations whose recommendations compelled the university to confront the realities of racism, sexism and bullying. Consequently, a report was developed and presented to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of Council” (Unisa 2018b: 121).

The document reveals that while the attainment of democracy in 1994 granted the indigenous majority political freedom, global imperatives, structural inequalities and injustices are curtailing their emancipation and empowerment (Conradie 2016; Heleta 2018; Le Roux 2016). The CRT challenges ahistoricism and can be used as an

analytical tool to interrogate injustices which mar higher education institutions despite efforts to decolonise and transform them (Ladson-Billings 2005). Engaging the South African Human Rights Commission to investigate racism, sexism and bullying, can be appreciated as a practical implementation agenda. Addressing discrimination will enhance equality amongst all the employees and students within the institution. The protection of the rights of individuals, irrespective of their gender, colour, and religious affiliation, will create a conducive teaching and learning environment. Humanist pedagogy is thus evidently being implemented at the institution.

In the Vision and Mission Statement, student-centred approaches are emphasised in the section which outlines the institutional core values. The following quotation confirms this:

“...responsive student-centredness reflects our commitment and recognising, cultivating and promoting the interests and views students especially their lived experiences and prior learning in order to achieve academic success in an Open Distance e-learning context (Unisa 2020a: 1-2).

The above quotation confirms UNISA’s learner-centredness principle which is used in provisioning teaching and learning through an ODeL model. This is further supported by Manyike (2017) and Mendy and Madiope (2020). The use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) is evidence of student centred approaches in teaching in the ODeL context. Accordingly Zireva (2016) and Letseka (2016) attest to the importance of the use of ICT in enhancing learning within an ODeL context through student centredness. Responsiveness is thus understood as the ability to meet curriculum expectations and the needs of the twenty-first century students and communities (National Higher Education Transformation Summit 2015; UNISA 2019a).

The statements above, which emphasise students’ centredness, can be aligned to the critical race pedagogies. One of the CRT tenets is the importance of experiential knowledge which consists of storytelling, counter narratives, family histories and

parables of those who are involved in a phenomenon and which are sources of lived experiences (Bell 1980; Ladson- Billings 2005; Matsuda 1991). From a CRT perspective, student centredness calls for centring students in teaching and learning contexts (Kennemer and Knaus 2019; Mensah 2019; Sleeter 2017). Student centered approaches advocate the incorporation of students' diverse lived experiences. Thus, academics at UNISA are expected to use students' cultural and lived experiences to clarify concepts (UNISA 2019a). This creates opportunities for the students to connect with the content taught at a personal level and become more engaged in the learning process. It further enables students to critique the content as it is relevant to their lived experiences (Yosso 2002).

I am of the opinion that by using students' experiences in their learning, students will begin to realise and appreciate the worth of their own knowledge systems and identities (Adonis and Silinda 2021; Seyama 2020). ODeL settings which promote student centered pedagogies are aligned to emancipatory strategies which promote a critical race curriculum (Ledesma and Calderon 2015; Lynn 2004). Student centred pedagogies at UNISA are enhanced through the use of the myUnisa platform where students and academics engage in discussions to ensure that students are sufficiently supported (Setlhodi 2021).

For urgent communication purposes, UNISA makes use of short message services (sms) to communicate with the students. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the institution to fully online teaching and learning as such new technologies have been introduced. UNISA also uses the Moodle platforms for teaching and learning purposes. Moodle is a learning management system which is used for blended and distance learning. According to Van der Berg (2020), UNISA has adopted open content to its student as an alternative to combat barriers caused by COVID-19 pandemic. Platforms such as open educational resources (OER) are used which provide shorter texts for courses and videos which students can access on the internet to enhance their learning (Van den Berg 2020:9). I therefore believe that use of Moodle platforms is a suitable ODeL emancipatory pedagogy which can reduce barriers to learning faced by students and academics who are separated by time and space.

The 2018 Annual Report details that a Transformation Unit was established in 2018 to facilitate curriculum transformation across the colleges.

“The unit conducted workshops and seminars for students in the regions focusing on, inter alia, the integration of a Human Rights Pedagogy and what transformation of curricula means for Unisa students” (UNISA 2018b: 63).

When students are involved in seminars and workshops, platforms are thus created for the students to give input on matters which affect their learning outcomes. Those inputs in turn provide opportunities for academics to reflect on their teaching. Academics are able to adjust their teaching and learning materials and assessments accordingly to meet their students’ needs. From a CRT perspective, engagement of students in seminars and workshops is a praxis which deals with on-the-ground issues concerning transformative education (Ledesma and Calderon 2015; Lynn and Parker 2006).

There is also evidence of the decolonisation of infrastructure as evidenced by the renaming of UNISA buildings and facilities (UNISA 2019). A total of three buildings were renamed, namely AJH van der Walt Building is now called Simon Nkoane Radipere Building (after the passing away of an academic while at work), Theo van Wyk Building was renamed Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and the third building, Samuel Pawl (the library), was renamed Lembede on 21 August 2019 (UNISA 2019b). Winnie-Madikizela Mandela and Lembede buildings were named thus to commemorate and honour the fallen heroes for their outstanding contributions as stalwarts of the apartheid struggle. Renaming is also a way to seal the link between the stalwarts and the struggle for the attainment of education by all young people in South Africa (UNISA 2019b).

I seek to cement a link between the renaming of the buildings explained above to the decolonial concepts of negotiating, remembering and healing which decolonial scholars such as Chilisa (2012; 2019) and Smith (2012) emphasise. From Chilisa’s (2012) point of view, it can be asserted that the renaming of the buildings may be explained as a way of rediscovery, restoration and validation of the African people’s

histories and identities which have been marginalised during apartheid (cf. 2.2). In addition, the renaming is synonymous to deconstruction of the myth that being African was substandard. It invokes mournful memories and lamentations about the assault on the African culture and identities before and after attainment of political independence (Chilisa 2012; cf. 2.2). The renaming may also be paralleled to concepts of remembering, claiming and connecting as decolonisation tools (Smith 2012). Thus, by renaming the buildings, UNISA remembers the efforts of those who fought in the struggle for democracy. The remembering leads to an experience of pain which ultimately results in the indigenous people standing up to reclaim their African identities and knowledge systems as valuable.

However, the renaming of UNISA buildings after the South African heroes and heroines as discussed above may be criticised as tokenism. Tokenism is a superficial pluralism in which the shift from exclusion to inclusion of marginalised groups accomplishes only illusions of progress (Biko 2004; Mathebane and Sekudu 2018). In my opinion, effective and sustainable decolonisation of the curriculum requires all stakeholders to be wary of possible signs of aesthetic or cosmetic changes which do not contribute to curriculum transformation.

From the document analysis done in this subsection, there is evidence of implementation of the transformation agenda at UNISA. The 2018, 2019 integrated Annual Reports; 2016 UNISA Language Policy; Vision and Mission Statement; UNISA 2015: an Agenda for transformation; and 2018 ODeL Policy indicates that UNISA position itself as an ODeL institution which employs e-Learning student centred approaches for teaching and learning. Through its ODeL teaching and learning model, the documents analysed highlight that UNISA seeks to engage its diverse student body beyond space and time through digital technologies. Although such a model is a positive step towards promotion of access to education for all its students, there is need to be cognisant of a possibility of widening the divide between students who have and others without digital technological resources.

In the next subsection, analysis is provided on the documents which reveal the challenges faced by UNISA in the implementation of its transformation agenda.

5.2.3 Challenges faced in the implementation of the transformation agenda at UNISA

Notwithstanding its pledge to be an African focused institution where the curriculum is being transformed and decolonised as discussed in the above sections, the documents analysed in this section show that UNISA is cognisant of the compelling need to be globally competitive (UNISA 2019a). Through global competitiveness the institution seeks to fulfill the interests of those who set the parameters of such competitiveness.

The UNISA 2030 Strategy is an important document which charts forward the ODeL institution's aspirations to transform itself in the global context which compels it to be competitive in many areas. UNISA 2030 Strategy is a revision of UNISA's 2015: An Agenda for Transformation, which was introduced after the merger of the former University of South Africa, Technikon South Africa and the Vista University Distance Education Centre to form the new UNISA (UNISA 2020b).

The UNISA 2030 Strategy has as one of its aims to create optimal conditions for teaching, learning and community engagements (UNISA 2020b). It is UNISA's aspiration to make strides in changing its students' learning styles, engaging in Massive Open Online Courses and shifting its student demographics to include not only the working and part-time students but also non-working full-time students (UNISA 2020).

According to UNISA (2020b), the UNISA 2030 Strategy aims to create best conditions for teaching, learning and community engagement. This will be achieved through making new strides in changing learning styles, changing labour markets, engaging in Massive Open Online Courses and shifting student demographics to include not only non-working and part-time students but also those who study as full-time students. However, one of the challenges UNISA is currently facing is that its context is marred by imbalances and injustices of apartheid which it must overcome (UNISA 2020b). Additionally, UNISA acknowledges the impact of COVID-19 on its operations which resulted in the need to expand and improve its ICTs and take care of the health of its

staff (UNISA 2020b). Thus, COVID-19 has forced the institution to move from the blended learning mode to fully online operations. Such changes have contributed to the transformation of the curriculum at the institution.

The Mission Statement is also another document which has snapshots of the challenging circumstances in which UNISA operates. For example, the Mission Statement ends with an emphasis on the need to nurture global sustainability. The end of the statement reads thus:

“Our efforts contribute to the knowledge and information society, advance development, nurtures a critical citizenry and ensures global sustainability”(UNISA 2020a:1).

The concluding sentence of the Mission Statement quoted above shows that the global imperative may, to some extent, defeat the whole purpose of centring Africa in the curriculum. Meeting global expectations might require an adjustment in UNISA’s purpose of centring Africa in its curricula. However, if centring Africa in the curricula entails accommodating relevant Global North knowledges, then graduates from the institution will be critical thinkers who will be able to be productive citizens in their communities. Presently, the global village is controlled and hegemonised by Global North or Western supremacist ideologies as far as knowledge systems are concerned. According to Jansen (2017) and Lange (2017), African higher education systems which seek to promote global sustainability, not just continental sustainability are not well positioned to centre their curricula with African knowledge systems.

The documents analysed suggest that UNISA has developed several frameworks which guide its conceptualisation of curriculum transformation and its implementation through an ODeL model. I accessed these documents for analysis while being cognisant of other policy frameworks which are in existence at the institution which I could not access. An analysis of the selected documents assisted in contextualising the study which explored perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. The documents are however not exhaustive of all framework policies at UNISA.

I consider the documents analysed in sections 5.1 and 5.2 as official artifacts designed to frame the UNISA context in which its students and staff operate. As such, the senior academics and postgraduate students who participated in this study operate within an ODeL context which prioritises centring Africa in its endeavour to decolonise its curriculum amid global imperatives which the institution also seeks to meet. It is therefore important to point out that the findings from both senior academics and students in the following sections were discussed against that background.

Section 5.3 below is a presentation and discussion of empirical findings from semi-structured individual telephonic interviews with the postgraduate students who participated in this study.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

The study explored the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL in South Africa. Twelve postgraduate students participated in this study. There were several follow up interviews which I conducted with some participants for member checking. The following subsection presents and discusses demographic information and the major and sub-themes which emerged from the analysed data respectively.

5.3.1 Demographical information of postgraduate students

The twelve postgraduate students who took part in this study were given pseudonyms to protect their identities. Their demographic information is presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5. 2: Demographical information of postgraduate students

Pseudo names	Age	gender	Programme studied	Department where registered	Stage in the programme
S1 Social Sciences	56	M	Ph.D History	Social Sciences	Second year
S2 Economic and Management Sciences	49	M	Master of Public Administration	Economic and Management Sciences	Second year
S3 Social Sciences	47	F	M A Development Studies	Social Sciences	Third year
S4 Science Engineering	49	M	Master's in information sciences	Science, Engineering and Technology	Third year
S5 Science Engineering	41	M	Ms Geography	Science, Engineering and Technology	Third year
S6 Law	29	F	M A Criminal Justice	Law	Second year
S7 Law	57	M	Ph.D Law	Law	Third year
S8 Science and Technology	47	M	Ph.D Ed	Science and Technology	Second year
S9 Social Work	28	F	M A Social Work	Social Work	Second year

S10 African Languages	35	F	Ph.D African Languages	African Languages	Third year
S11 Mathematics Education	39	F	Ph.D Mathematics	Mathematics Education	Second year
S12 Language Education	47	F	Ph.D Ed	Language, Arts and Culture	Second year

Table 5.2 indicates that six of the participants are males and six are females. Their ages range from 28 to 57 years. Six are registered for the masters' research component module. The other six are currently registered for the Ph. D research component.

5.3.2 Findings from semi-structured individual telephonic interviews with postgraduate students

The following sections present and discuss findings from semi- structured telephonic interviews conducted with the sampled twelve postgraduate students. Two main themes emerged from the analysed interview data: a) conceptualisation of decolonisation of university curriculum and b) use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise the curriculum. From each of the two main themes sub-themes emerged.

Both the main themes and their sub-themes are summarised in Table 5.3.

Table 5 3: Emergent themes from interview data

Main themes	Sub themes
5.3.2.1 Conceptualisation of decolonisation of university curriculum	a) Removal of stringent Western or Eurocentric curriculum b) Dismantling of institutional cultures and power imbalances c) Dismantling inequality in student funding
5.3.2.2 Use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise the curriculum	a) The adoption of a new language policy at UNISA b) English hegemony at UNISA c) The use of local histories and culture to transform curriculum

5.3.2.1 Conceptualisation of decolonisation of university curriculum

The interview findings revealed the multifaceted ways in which participants understood the concept of decolonisation of the university curriculum. These multifaceted ways are presented and discussed as sub-themes in the subsections which follow. As different definitions were given, I present and discuss the findings on the conceptualisation of decolonisation of the university curriculum according to the various definitions provided in the following sections (cf. 5.3.2.1a; 5.3.2.1 b; 5.3.2.1 c).

a) Removal of stringent Eurocentric or Western curriculum

The findings revealed that some participants viewed decolonisation of the university curriculum as entailing the removal of colonial restrictions such as dominant Western oriented course content which characterises the current curriculum. The findings

further revealed that Eurocentric or Western elements of the curriculum appear to inhibit students understanding of their learning materials. The quotation below provides evidence.

It is the dismantling and removing the elements which make reading of tutorial letters of module content difficult colonial education systems in order to re-address the education injustices...the module that we receive on myUnisa sometimes needs to be disassembled, taken into pieces to allow stakeholders to strip the curriculum of all elements which promote injustices(S1 Social Sciences).

Similarly, participant said:

I think it is the removal of all unfair apartheid factors which still exist in the curriculum, for example in the Economic and Management Sciences curriculum, to bring about justice (S2 Economic and Management Sciences).

The above finding was supported by another participant who provided examples of a decolonised curriculum as:

That which seeks to validate the knowledges of the marginalised by removing coloniality from what is designed as the Development Studies module content (S3 Social Sciences).

The idea of addressing the colonial aspects of the curriculum was also explained thus:

It is about addressing coloniality which is prevalent in the curricula in various colleges at this institution, for example in other departments such as Engineering, Mathematics and other hard sciences at this institution. All theories used are those from the West. English is also used as medium of instruction. It takes more time to read and understand than if modules were offered in Sotho, which is my home language (S4 Science Engineering).

Similarly, S6 Law shared thus:

In the context of UNISA, decolonisation of university curriculum includes the removal of segregation principles by embracing diversity.

While S6 Law acknowledged diversity, S8 Science and Technology revealed a negative attitude towards all Western elements in the current curricula. The following excerpt confirms this finding:

Every principle brought in by the Dutch or other white settlers to control what should be taught and removed in an Open Distance University, especially issues around discrimination, to make sure that the mission of UNISA is true (S8 Science and Technology).

The excerpts above indicate the participants' views of decolonising the curriculum to entail the removal from the curriculum Eurocentric knowledges which promote social injustices. Furthermore, the research findings revealed that exalting European epistemologies such as the exclusive use of Eurocentric theories and epistemologies which are far removed from students' lived experiences makes it difficult for most of them to understand and apply gained knowledges in their environments. The use of Eurocentric theories and epistemologies is criticised by the postgraduate students as epistemological racism. There appears to be a similarity in the conceptualisation of decolonisation of curricula by the sampled postgraduate students with the institutions' articulation in the analysed documents. The Integrated Transformation Strategy (2019a:5) , for example, regards decolonisation as a radical social process of eradicating all forms of discrimination, marginalisation and alienation at various levels and dimensions by provincialising knowledges from Europe and Africa while knowledges from Africa are deprovincialised, which entails centring African knowledges in the curricula (cf. 5.2.1)

In the findings above, the definitions and the examples of decolonisation of the curriculum provided by the postgraduate students are consistent with those of Stein and Andreotti (2017) and WaThiongo (1994), which allude to the move away from

unfair Eurocentric norms and practices in the curriculum (cf. 2.2.1). The findings presented in this section also corroborate empirical study findings by Badat (2017), Luckett et al. (2019), Mamdani (2018) and Sebidi and Morreira (2017) that the university curriculum in postcolonial contexts is marred by injustices perpetuated by the colonial rule (cf. 3.1).

I am of the opinion that a decolonised curriculum is one that is disentangled from viewing Eurocentric knowledge as the objective reality since the world is not homogenous. Thus, as asserted by CRT theorists, the world consists of people with different beliefs, identities and attitudes (Harris 1995; Ladson-Billings 2005). I further contend that UNISA is not an exception from this observation. As such, it is my conviction that to accommodate people from heterogeneous backgrounds at UNISA, embracing diverse epistemology could assist curriculum designers, developers and implementers to deliver curriculum content that provides a balance between the Global North and the Global South in order to ensure the achievement of both social and cognitive justice.

- b) Dismantling of institutional cultures, structural imbalances and power relation

A significant number of participants pointed out that for a curriculum to be understood as decolonised, it should seek to dismantle structural imbalances and the power relations in the university's system. Student 5 from the Science and Engineering Department had this to say:

The decolonisation of University curriculum refers to the planned systematic changes that will vindicate themselves through dismantling the control systems which are put in place by those who are in power. For example, lecturers who always want students to frame their postgraduate research studies on Global North theories when the student would rather use alternative paradigms (S5 Science and Engineering).

Another participant pointed out:

My understanding is that the term decolonisation of the university curriculum means the transformation and advancement of the supervision strategies which promotes power balances among the staff and students even online (S9 Social Work).

Some participants suggested that decolonisation of university curriculum is a progressive move to improve the power dynamics between students and the academics. One of the participants said:

The master- follower relationship between some academics and students at UNISA should be deconstructed for a better one. I appreciate an online learning environment in which the communication between my research supervisor and I is full of respect (S6 Law).

In addition to the findings above, other participants made the following comments:

In trying to free the university from being a space where the teacher is the knower, and the student as tabula rasa, the challenge is that there are still other supervisors who can send demoralising feedback and comments though phone calls or email (S7 Law).

Those who teach should create opportunities for conversation on the matter. Gain feedback from students on their views, experiences and thoughts (S10 African Languages).

It is important for the UNISA academics to strive to decolonise power bases in their interactions with students, during supervision at postgraduate levels (S11 Mathematics Education).

Another participant strongly argued that as a Ph.D student who anticipates his work to be published, he faces frustration, which he linked to his identity. He said:

It's very difficult for some of us to have our research work accepted for publication. Not because the articles are substandard, but because of mere racism. Sometimes a student ends up thinking that a research study framed on African theories is not good enough for good research (S12 Language, Arts and Culture).

Another participant expressed bitter sentiments about how discriminative it can be when it seeking for research publication. Below is an excerpt which confirms this finding:

Some journals will not easily accept a research article for publication if it is contrary to the whiteness which they anticipate seeing (S10 African Languages).

The findings in the above excerpts revealed that a decolonised curriculum entails eradicating knowledge hierarchy between students and academics. Academics should recognise that they have something to learn from the students as much as students are learning from them. Such an understanding will create mutual relationships between academics and their students for effective learning to take place. The findings about existence of a master-servant relationship corroborates Manyike (2017) who asserts that in an ODeL context, some supervisors lack the skills and knowledge to work with students from diverse cultures hence supervisor- student relationships are marred by conflict. Findings from the postgraduate students in this study are incongruent with other studies conducted at an ODeL institution which revealed that postgraduate research supervisors should respect the *ubuntu* philosophy in their supervision (Gumbo 2019). In an ODeL context, notwithstanding the incongruence, I concur with Letseka (2016) that the power relations can be regulated by using the concept of *ubuntu*, a value system inherent in the African culture which hinges on mutual interdependence, caring and kindness between supervisor and students. From the findings in this study, there is therefore need to dismantle patronage in communications between supervisors and their students.

Findings about postgraduate students' challenges in publishing their articles are in line with Bell's (2004) key CRT interest convergence principle. The interest convergence principle asserts that the dominant groups or institutions will tolerate advances for justice and equity only when those advances suit the self-interests of the concerned groups (Bell 1980). The example of academics who want students to feel that they are superior during lesson delivery explains the interest convergence principle in practice at the institution. Such academics represent the dominant groups in the institution who are in privileged positions of power. Most dominant groups appear to cling on teaching approaches which privilege them over the powerless. I conclude therefore that there is intersectionality of power and interest in how some academics may be interacting with students while giving student feedback on their research work. I further contend that sites within the institution where systems of privilege and power override equality and equity to education should be transformed.

The findings presented in this section about participants facing difficulties in having their research published are in line with Adonis and Silinda (2021) who posit that some academics allow research to be determined by those who are ready to buy their research and writing skills. The findings further echo Sahlins's (2013) seminal work which illuminates coloniality as a power structure which negates the othered people as agents in determining their own future (cf. 3.3).

Thus, from a CRT perspective there is intersectionality of knowledge production and institutional culture (Apple 1993). It follows that, in the politics of what constitutes knowledge, there is never a neutral collection of knowledges (Pinar 2011; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). Instead, the knowledge which becomes legitimate is created out of cultural and class tensions. Consequently, the 'what' and 'how' it should be produced contribute to reproduction of dominance and subordination dichotomy in academia (Bell 1992; Ladson-Billings 2013; Solórzano and Yosso 2001). In that dichotomy, the elite culture legitimises social differences and functions which are evident between and among those who are more powerful (Apple 1993; Bourdieu 1984). I contend that the dominant groups possess power to decide what kind of research publication to accept for publication. In cases where the subordinates seek to challenge the status quo, it is an ideological attack in the eyes of the powerful.

The next subsection is a presentation and discussion on dismantling inequality in student funding as one of the sub-themes.

c) Dismantling inequality in student funding

The findings revealed that the twelve postgraduate students' experience with regard to the university funding systems influenced their understanding of decolonisation of university curriculum. Thus, their socio-economic backgrounds appear to be disadvantaging them due to lack of the necessary financial stability which negatively impacts on their academic success. Failure to secure funding after various attempts made them realise the need for decolonisation of the funding systems at UNISA. The current UNISA funding policy categorically outlines that the institution will provide financial assistance to students on the grounds of academic merit, financial need of the student and specific requirements set by the financial donors (UNISA 2016b). It is also stated in the policy in 1.2 that UNISA undertakes to ensure that academically deserving and financially needy South African students are not denied access to university studies due to financial challenges if meeting donor criteria (UNISA 2016b). Unfortunately, the policy is silent about financial assistance for non- South African students.

The findings revealed thus:

There is need to decolonise the way student funding is done at UNISA (S1 Social Sciences).

Another participant said:

Some students who deserve NASFAS or bursary for postgraduate studies do not receive such financial assistance, such students are forced to drop out of universities due to financial constraints (S4 Science Engineering).

Similar sentiments were revealed as shown below:

I have been applying for bursary but did not receive it. Yet my friends always got it. It takes more years than necessary to complete my studies because sometimes I would drop out after failing to pay for tuition (S7 Law).

I am doing my Ph.D, but I haven't yet received any bursary. So, when I read about decolonial debates, I was interested in such readings (S12 Language, Arts and Culture).

The authorities responsible for funding should transform from the belief that local students benefit from the bursary before any other student. International students should equally benefit from the funding (S3 Social Sciences).

The participants further explained that student funding was also an issue amongst the complaints raised by students in the popular HashTagFeesMustFall and HashTagRhodesMustFall protest of 2015- 2016.

The following statements confirm this finding:

The 2015- 2016 students' protests were largely influenced by injustices in funding. They raised issues about exclusion. They also demanded free university education. When you look at all those issues, you get interested. We still raise the same issue (S1 Social Sciences).

I remember the complaints about NASFAS in the students' protest of 2015 and 2016, and then I got so much motivated about the decolonisation debates (S6 Law).

The findings above raise three critical claims about the problems with funding at UNISA whereby some who deserve NASFAS or bursaries do not get them; others dropout when they fail to get funding as they do not have money to register and they take prolonged time to complete their studies (Manyike 2018). Finally, it is frustrating for international students who are not receiving first preference for funding. In my opinion, the dropout rate due to lack of funding needs to be addressed as it highlights

some limitations in the student funding system. However, the flip side of the matter is that some students who receive NSFAS funding at South African higher education institutions still drop out (DHET 2014; DHET 2019; Musundire and Mumanyi 2020). They lose focus and get carried away by prodigious spending at the expense of their learning. At the end of the day, the South African government and the universities lose a lot of money which may not be recovered. Such dropouts may illuminate that access is not being translated to academic success. When students from marginalised backgrounds get study funds, they are accorded opportunities to participate in the decolonial discourses in their learning. That could be through their assessment tasks, seminars or the online platforms such as myUnisa discussion forums. However, if they drop out or do not get funding, their input is missed. That will negatively impact on the decolonisation project if their voice is silent yet, it is highly valued to steer the debate forward.

In light of the problems raised about student funding at UNISA, it is imperative to critically engage with the institution's funding policy which contains the funding principles. According to section 3.3 of the Student Funding Policy, students are required to apply for NASFAS funding if they meet the funding criteria. The selection of successful applicants depends on them meeting the NASFAS funding criteria (UNISA 2016). After concluding the selection process, NASFAS submits the list of provisionally selected students to UNISA. In turn, UNISA allocates and confirms registration to NASFAS (UNISA 2016). The funding process indicates that UNISA is not responsible for the selection of NASFAS students. The selection responsibility is thus beyond its control as NASFAS is an independent body. The 2016 UNISA Student Funding Policy does not provide any details about the criteria which NASFAS adheres to when selecting students for funding. Since this study was on perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of university curriculum at an ODeL in South Africa, I considered more details about NASFAS process beyond the scope of this study.

Similar findings on inadequate funding for disadvantaged students in higher education institutions are shared by Adonis and Silinda (2021). These authors assert that many historically disadvantaged students face financial difficulties which hinder their

academic success. Adonis and Silinda's (2021) findings refer to student funding in general, whereas findings in this study specifically relate to funding in an ODeL institution in South Africa, which is UNISA. Findings in this study contradict other findings for example, CHE (2013), Luckett et al. (2019) and Luckett and Shay (2017) which show noticeable progress in transforming student funding within South African universities. Notwithstanding past studies in which findings show evidence of improvement in student funding, the findings in this section revealed that student funding continues to be an area of concern in this ODeL institution.

Findings presented in this section are thus in line with issues which triggered the 2015-2016 student protest movements across South African universities. These findings corroborate a wide body of literature such as Heleta (2018), Jansen (2019), Waghid (2019) and Mamdani (2018), which confirm that one of the major causes of the 2015-2016 student protest was a demand for equity in student funding. The 2016 UNISA's Student Funding Policy outlines that the financial support which the students at UNISA are granted is offered to support all South African students who are financially needy and those students who live with disabilities (UNISA 2016b; cf. 5.1; 5.3).

In the next section I present and discuss the second main theme emerging from the analysed data: the use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise the curriculum.

5.3.2.2 The use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise the curriculum

Another main theme which emerged from the findings is the use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise the university curriculum. Under this main theme, the following sub-themes emerged:

- a) adoption of new language policy;
- b) advantages of indigenous languages as media of instruction; and c) the use of local cultures and histories in curriculum content

In the next subsection, I present and discuss the sub-theme on adoption of new language policy to decolonise the curriculum at UNISA.

a) Adoption of new university language policy at UNISA

Participants mentioned the adoption of the 2016 UNISA language policy which accommodates the use of indigenous languages for scaffolding as a means of decolonising the UNISA curriculum (cf. 5.1) above.

One participant explained:

When students protested in 2015 and 2016 in South African universities, UNISA reviewed its language policy to accommodate inclusion of some indigenous languages for teaching and learning. That move impacted on how I see decolonisation (S3 Social Sciences).

Another participant articulated:

By adopting a policy which recognises local languages, it shows that UNISA is trying to decolonise the curriculum (S1 Social Sciences).

A similar contribution was elaborated thus:

I got motivated when students protested and demanded that they wanted to be taught in their home languages, it was a wakeup call for this university to rethink its language policy (S12 Language, Arts and Culture).

The findings further reveal that the inclusion of indigenous languages as media to support learning is advantageous at UNISA. Some of the advantages stated are articulated in the excerpts below:

The use of indigenous language as to support teaching and learning will improve students' outcome because in the long run it means students will receive learning materials and tutorial letters on myUnisa in their home languages. It also will end in students, writing assignments and examinations in their home languages (S4 Science Engineering).

Learning in my home language would truly show that UNISA is accommodating students who would otherwise not succeed academically using English medium of instruction (S9 Social Work).

Another participant supported the view that indigenous languages as media of instruction help in promoting student success. The student shared thus:

If students can be taught in their home languages, that will go a long way in improving their educational outcomes. Imagine during this era of COVID-19 and online examination. Using their home languages to write examinations will serve more time and data (S5 Science Engineering).

Another participant concurred:

When my supervisor calls me to clarify his feedback which he emails via mylife, he speaks in Tshivenda. We are both Venda speaking. It helps me a lot when I go back to the chapter review comments which he writes in English. I always understand the comments better after getting clarification in Tshivenda (S10 African Languages).

It was also shared:

In the long run, UNISA should allow masters or doctoral students to write theses in their home languages (S3 Social Sciences).

The findings from the quotations above show that UNISA is centring South African indigenous languages by using them to scaffold learning. The findings further revealed that the use of indigenous languages as medium of instruction will enhance students' academic success. In terms of research modules, the findings suggest that postgraduate students conducting research could adopt decolonised research methodologies in their studies.

The findings further revealed that students should be given opportunities to write their thesis and dissertations in their home languages. It appears that some postgraduate students are not well versed with the 2016 language policy. The policy categorically outlines in section 4.3.3 that postgraduate students are allowed to write proposals, theses or dissertations in a) the language of the subject in which the proposal, theses or dissertation is offered, or b) any of South Africa's official language, or c) any other language as approved by the relevant College Higher Degree Committee if there is sufficient supervisory capacity (UNISA 2016a). Madadzhe (2019) confirms that UNISA is one of the South African universities such as University of Limpopo, University of Pretoria and University of Venda where students are afforded the choice to conduct their studies in either English or an African language of their choice at Master's and Doctoral levels.

However, some literature confirms that transformation in relation to the use of indigenous languages for knowledge production has not taken root at UNISA (Ngulube 2021). Thus, it can be argued that in principle, the policy directives clearly articulates that at postgraduate levels such as Master's and Doctoral, students can choose a language to use in their research work, but in practice, this is an ideal yet to be realised at UNISA. UNISA should therefore educate its postgraduate students about the language policy in use as it appears from the findings that some of them are not aware that the policy has provision for use of any official language in writing theses or dissertations.

By adopting a language policy in which the indigenous South African languages are being used to support learning, UNISA is elevating the status of these languages. According to Alexander (2013) and Wolff (2018), using indigenous languages in higher education enhances academic success of speakers of these languages.

There is however a recent development concerning the language policy in use at UNISA. On 22 September 2021, the Constitutional Court of South Africa gave a ruling that UNISA should adopt Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. In the 2016 Language Policy, Afrikaans was phased out as a medium of instruction. After the ruling was made the UNISA representative in the court ruling articulated that the institution would need considerable time to prepare for the reinstatement of Afrikaans as a medium of

instruction in the revised language policy framework. This new development comes at a time when UNISA is revising its language policy to meet its 2030 transformation plan.

The next subsection presents and discusses English hegemony at UNISA.

b) English hegemony at UNISA

Findings revealed that despite attempts to decolonise the medium of instruction at UNISA, English hegemony at UNISA is still prevalent since other languages are only used to support learning. This finding is indicated in the statements below:

Most of the teaching and learning at UNISA is done through English medium of instruction (S7 Law).

Here, English remains the primary language of teaching and learning (S9 Social Work).

In our language policy at this institution, although other languages are accommodated, they are only used to scaffold learning (S6 Law).

Another participant observed that English as medium of instruction at UNISA is a barrier to the development of the indigenous languages as media of instruction:

Using English for teaching and learning oppresses and dominates other languages and cultures (S9 Social Work).

Alternatively, a participant said:

Unfortunately, we should realise that use of English is an example, of colonisation but also that English is the gateway to economic freedom in the world, hence many choose to be taught through English medium over their home languages (S3 Social Sciences).

Similarly, another participant said:

The language of instruction must be universal. We may be agitating for decolonisation of the language of instruction, yet we become short sighted because upon graduation the graduates become “colonised” and not free to work anywhere else except here where South African indigenous languages are spoken (S11Mathematics Education).

Another participant raised the point that:

With the internationalisation of universities, it is now impossible to halt the use of English medium of instruction (S12 Language, Arts and Culture).

The findings presented in this section captured two contrasting perceptions regarding the hegemony of English as a medium of instruction at UNISA. While some postgraduate students perceive the hegemony of English as promoting linguistic imperialism, others revealed that promotion of indigenous as medium of instruction will limit UNISA’s graduates opportunities to compete in the globalised village. The million-dollar question is: which way should be taken? UNISA’s 2016 Language Policy reads: *“All formal study material, formative and summative assessment, as well as other formal tuition activities will be in English, whereas learner support activities may be in the language of the students”*(UNISA 2016a:4). Thus, to a larger extent, the prestige of English as a language of instruction is protected by the institution’s language policy. I applaud UNISA for its multilingual approach to learning materials which is evidenced by its use of glossaries in most of its modules across colleges. Furthermore, some level 5 tutorial letters are translated into some of the official languages. Also, in 2018, the College of Education piloted the language policy by offering all NQF level 5 modules examination question papers which were translated into nine indigenous African languages (UNISA 2018b; cf. 5.1; 5.2). This development was intended to provide progress for offering examination question papers in all the official languages. However, students were expected to answer in English. Although these are all steps in the right direction there is a need to have programmes offered in the official indigenous languages to enhance students’ academic success.

Similar findings about the hegemony of English as a gatekeeper are evident in studies conducted by Le Roux (2016) and Mahabeer (2018). Thus, it can be argued that linguistic racism in the institution's language policy could be taking over from racism in more subtle ways which hierarchise social groups in the present global village (Phillipson 1992).

The findings presented in this section reveal an underlying observation about the disadvantages experienced by English second language students who use the language as a medium of instruction. That is happening against the backdrop in which the 1996 Constitution declared IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, Sotho, Pedi, Xitsonga, Tswana, Tshivenda, Ndebele, Swati and Afrikaans languages as official languages (RSA 1996). This was followed by various statutory bodies such as the Language Policy for Higher Education (LPHE) of 2002 (DoE 2002) and South Africa Higher Education Act of 1997, then of late, the Revised Higher Education Language Policy of 2021. This latest Revised Higher Education Language Policy seeks to ensure that indigenous languages are used as medium of instruction and will be effective in January 2022. Accordingly, UNISA as an institution is consistent with the requirements of such statutory bodies in its strides towards development of indigenous languages for scaffolding and supporting students (UNISA 2016a).

Some key intersectionality between CRT and the medium of instruction should be realised in the findings presented in this section. According to CRT the language policies in postcolonial education systems are grounded in linguistic racism which gives rise to hierarchies of languages with English at the top (Ladson-Billings 1998; Ladson- Billings and Tate 1995) and indigenous languages at the bottom. This intersectionality between English medium instruction and CRT may be used to examine linguistic and racial identities in the use of English as a medium of instruction while other official languages such as Sesotho, Tshivenda, Sepedi, Setswana, isiNdebele, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Siswati and Xitsonga play subordinate roles. Academics should thus be cognisant of the role of linguistic imperialism and race identities in informing students' learning as they use of English as a medium of instruction. Academics need to raise awareness about cultural interpretations which students from

less dominant groups may have and how curriculum designers and implementers at the institution may tap from that to improve practice.

In the next subsection, findings are presented and discussed on the use of local histories and cultures to transform the curriculum

c) The use of local histories and cultures to transform the curriculum

The findings revealed that local histories and cultures are important tools which can be used to decolonise the curriculum at UNISA. According to the findings, local cultures and histories refer to the indigenous knowledges of South Africans in particular and Africans at large. These findings are affirmed by the statements by the participants below:

As a Law doctoral student, the term decolonisation of the university curriculum entails changing the Law curriculum at UNISA to reflect an African Philosophy of Ubuntu module as a compulsory module, for example (S7 Law).

A total transformation of the curriculum taking into consideration issues that have a direct influence on one's life (S5 Science Engineering).

We want to connect with the content for us to understand, critique and apply what we learn, thus bringing about interest and passion in our learning experiences (S9 Social Work).

In the Department of African languages at UNISA, where I'm registered, this is being achieved. A lot of African perspectives are already in use unlike in the past when African literature was critiqued through Global North worldviews only (S10 African Languages).

In showing how the realities of indigenous students can be provided in the curriculum, the following was proposed:

For example, in Curriculum studies, we could use African philosophies which replace dominant Western curriculum theories. My current study is guided by Ngugi Wa Thiongo's decolonial theory (S12 Language, Arts and Culture).

The idea of making indigenous values and cultures part of pedagogical practices resonates with the core values of UNISA. The institution's values are illuminated in its endeavour to Africanise and indigenise the institution by centring African culture and local values (UNISA 2019a; cf. 5.2.2; 5.2.3).

The findings presented above are also in tandem with findings by scholars such as Amundsen (2019) and Orange et al. (2017), which showed that cultural perspectives enhanced student learning in New Zealand university contexts (cf. 3.2.1). Study findings in some UK universities also revealed the need to rethink the curriculum content offered so that literature modules include works from the Global South to cater for international students from the Global South (Blackburn 2017; Colgan 2019; Sumner 2018).

The understanding of the decolonisation of curriculum at UNISA as entailing transforming the curriculum content to accommodate African values is in line with the principle of the CRT. It illuminates the fact that the current policy frameworks in use at UNISA could be promoting English hegemony through its use as primary medium of instruction. The language policy clearly states that English is the language of learning and teaching for undergraduate and postgraduate courses (UNISA 2016). Currently, developments have taken place where question papers are printed in the South African indigenous languages to support students at NQF level 5 in their examinations (Moropa 2021). However, this is done only to support students' understanding of the questions asked. As such, students are not allowed to provide answers to the examination question papers using their preferred languages.

The next section presents findings from senior academics who participated in this study.

5.4 FINDINGS FROM ONLINE QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE FROM SENIOR ACADEMICS

The findings from the senior academics who participated in this study are presented and discussed in this section. Pseudonyms were used for these senior academics to protect their identities. Firstly, I provide a demographic profile of the senior academics who participated in this study in Table 5.4 below.

Table: 5.4 Demographic information of senior academics who participated in the study

Name	Age	Gender	Title	Work experience	Course developer	Level taught	Department
P1 Human and Social Sciences	48	M	Dr	12 years	No	Third year, Masters	Human and Social Sciences
P2 Leadership and Business	48	F	Dr	10 years	No	Postgraduate research supervision	Leadership and Business
P3 Science and Engineering	55	F	Ass Prof	16 years	No	Postgraduate research supervisor	Science and Engineering
P4 Health Sciences	54	F	Dr	17 years	No	Learning facilitator	Health Sciences
P5 Economic and Management Sciences	56	M	Prof	17 years	Yes	Honors and Masters	Economic and Management Sciences

P6 Tuition and Facilita- tion of Learning	53	F	Ass Prof	21 years	No	Project Leader- Language Unit	Tuition 7 Facilitation of Learning
P7Social Work	52	F	Ass Prof	11 years	NO	Hours, masters research modules	Social work
P8 Language , Arts and Culture	51	M	Full Prof	11 years	No	Research in education, research supervisor	Language, Arts and Culture
P9 Curricu- lum and Instruc- tion	54	M	Full Prof	15 years	Yes	Research module, research supervisor	Curriculum and Instructional Studies
P10 Transfor- mation and Leader- ship	53	F	Full Prof	12 years	Yes	Project leader	Transformation and Leadership
P11Africa n Language	56	F	Full Prof	13 years	No	Research module, research supervisor	African Languages
P12 Human and Social Sciences	52	M	Full Prof		No	Socio linguistics	Human Sciences

P13 Early childhood education	56	M	FullPr of	20 years	Yes	Postgraduate honors and masters	Early childhood education
P14Scien ce and Techno- logy	57	M	Full Prof	25 years, 13 at current institution	Yes	Technology Education FDETE2B Subject Didactics SDTECSY	Science and technology
P15 Science and Techno- logy	56	F	Full Prof	11 years	No	Research professor	Science and Technology
P16 Science and Techno- logy	55	M	Full Prof	10 years	Yes	Mathematics education	Science and Technology

Table 5. 4 above shows that eight of the senior academics are female; the other eight are males. Three hold a Ph.D and thirteen are full professors. They have varying work experience both at university level as well as in their previous work environments prior to their appointment at this university. All of them were already working at the institution when the 2015-2016 student protest movement in South African universities took place. As a result, they were part of the academics who have implemented the transformation agenda at the institution which came as a result of the student protest movements. The senior academics were sampled from seven colleges namely: Education, Human and Social sciences, College of Graduate Studies, Economic and Management Sciences, Business and Leadership and Science and Engineering.

I emailed the qualitative questionnaire to each of the sixteen senior academics and the emailed the questionnaires back to me. The findings from the data revealed three

major themes with sub-themes which emerged. The major themes and sub-themes are tabulated in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5 Major and sub-themes which emerged from data from senior academics

Main themes	Subthemes
5.4.1 Conceptualisation of decolonisation of university curriculum	a) Dismantling Eurocentricism in the curriculum b) Decolonisation of the mind c) Decolonising power relations between academics and students
5.4.2 The use of IKS as a tool to decolonise the university curriculum	a) Use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise curriculum b) Challenges in using indigenous languages to support learning at UNISA c) Reclaiming the marginalised African scholarship

Table 5.5 provides a summary of the main themes and sub-themes which emerged from the analysed data gathered from the senior academics who participated in this study. I present and discuss the findings weaving in the theory and literature as discussed in chapters two and three.

5.4.1 Conceptualisation of decolonisation of university curriculum at UNISA

This is one of the main themes which emerged from the analysed data collected from senior academics who participated in this study. The findings outline senior academics' understanding of the decolonisation of the university curriculum. The responses provided by senior academics in unpacking decolonisation of the university curriculum revealed different perspectives in their understanding of the concept, thus, highlighting the complexities of the decolonisation agenda. Under this main theme four sub-themes emerged:

- a) dismantling Eurocentricism in the curriculum;
- b) decolonisation of the mind;
- c) the use of IKS as a tool to decolonise the university curriculum; and

- d) reclaiming the marginalised African scholarship.

These submissions are discussed in the section below.

- a) Dismantling Eurocentricism in the curriculum

Five of the senior academics who participated in this study were of the opinion that a decolonised university curriculum should be without Eurocentric elements. The following extracts clarify their conceptions:

Liberating the curriculum from its subtle Eurocentric, colonial and Western worldviews (P1 Human and Social Sciences).

In liberating the curriculum, what is taught and whose voice is pertinent in the teaching and learning process should be addressed (P9 Curriculum and Instruction).

By dismantling Eurocentricism which is dominant in our curriculum at UNISA, the aim is to show that no one vision is superior and decolonisation of the curriculum should address the coloniality of knowledge and power (P10 Transformation and Leadership).

I see decolonisation of university curriculum as dismantling the status quo, or let me say dismantling the essentialised myth that there is only one rigid way of being or becoming, there is only one way of knowing and there is only one way of delivering what is known. That one way is Eurocentricism (P13 Early Childhood Education).

In explaining how the dismantling of the colonised curricula could be achieved one participant stated:

In dismantling the colonised curriculum, the aim is to disrupt the hidden curriculum and reclaim the null curriculum and find its rightful place in the content, delivery of content and assessment (P11 African Languages).

Other participants emphasised that the process of liberating the curriculum from Eurocentricism is challenging. Below are comments on this issue:

Let me emphasise that the dismantling can be challenging (P8 Language, Arts and Culture).

The removal of coloniality in academy evokes aggressive emotions between the former colonisers and the formerly colonised. It sparks psychological discomfort which if not well handled can result in infighting (P4 Health Sciences).

Dismantling it is characterised by a lot of aggressive efforts and emotions (P7 Social Work).

These findings reveal that senior academics' understanding of a decolonised curriculum is one in which the dominant Eurocentricism is dismantled. The above findings reveal the need to revise the current curriculum because the university has inherited systems of coloniality as they were informed by Western ways of knowing. This view resonates with Hoppers (2017) and Shava and Manyike (2018), who propose a deconstruction and reconstruction of the curricula to promote justice in education. This is also in line with Ammon's (2019) view of the need to end the domination of Western epistemological underpinnings in higher education institution curricula and the schooling curricula in general.

The findings also illuminate that the dismantling process ignites aggressive attitudes from those who hold on to Eurocentricism and those who lobby for its dismantling. These findings concur with those of Lwandle and Yallew (2021) and Oyedemi (2018) who aver that the decolonisation process faces resistance from those who are opposed to it. Such objections have an impact in the implementation of the

decolonisation process. Scholars such as Mamdani (2016) and Stein and Andreotti (2017) assert that in such opposing contexts the introduction of a decolonised curriculum will be compromised. According to Fanon (1963), the conceptualisation of a decolonial curriculum as national liberation and restoration of nationhood to the people is a violent phenomenon. I am therefore of the view that such conflicts should be anticipated and dealt with professionally as they cannot be avoided in the decolonisation agenda.

The hidden curriculum refers to the institutional cultures which are sometimes characterised by imbalances and systemic racism which are taught to students and considered as normal (Apple 2018; Pratt 2020). In other words the hidden curriculum could be explained as referring to what students learn about dominant cultures of a university and the values which are reproduced by such a culture (Le Grange 2018). A CRT orientated researcher may link the ideas about the hidden curriculum in the findings as the subtle colour-blind ideology in the curriculum which distorts or omits the experiences of the minority groups (Kennemer and Knaus 2019; Ladson- Billings and Tate 1995; Lesdema and Calderon 2015; Mensah 2019; Solorzano and Yosso 2002). Thus, the concept of hidden curriculum sheds more light on the deficit discourse which provides the rationale for a discriminatory curriculum which maintains inequalities (Le Grange 2017; Love 2018; Hoppers 2017). I further advance that from a CRT point of view, what is not being taught reveals manifold layers of epistemological racism (Delgado and Stefancic 2012; Dixson and Rousseau 2005; Kennemer and Knaus 2019; Yosso 2002).

I further link the removal of the hegemony of Eurocentricism in the curriculum to a CRT perspective. Challenging dominant ideology is one of the five central tenets of CRT (Crenshaw 1995; Ladson- Billings and Tate 1995). In the context of the current study, the dominant ideology is that of the camouflaged coloniality of knowledge which serves the self-interest and power of Westernised worldviews (Solorzano 1998: 122). Disentangling Westernised epistemes from the curriculum will equip lecturers, academics and decolonisation researchers with a framework to challenge epistemological, racist and institutionalised educational inequality that persists in post-apartheid.

In the next subsection, findings on decolonising power relations between academics and students is presented and discussed.

b) Decolonising power relations between academics and students at UNISA

Several senior academics proposed ways in which power relations can be improved between academics and students from curriculum design to the implementation stage through online engagements in an open distance e-Learning context.

It was proposed thus:

We should be ready to disrupt the master servant dichotomy in our online teaching and research supervision by centring student engagements (P12 Human and Social Sciences).

In the same vein, another participant suggested that:

There is need for cultural decolonisation in ODeL to help students to continue reconnecting with and validating their own cultures without fear or shame. Students and academics should be ready to appreciate diverse students input based on diverse cultural orientations if their arguments and answers are relevant (P2 Leadership and Business).

In explaining the idea of erasing the master-servant relationship at UNISA, it was suggested that:

To be able to decolonise the curriculum, colleagues/peers and students should be included in module/programme design (P5 Economic and Management Sciences).

Other participants revealed a different dimension about how the master- servant relationship in teaching and supervision can be dismantled. It was suggested:

I must ask myself the relevance of what I intend to teach. I should allow spaces for students to frame their research on relevant non- Western theoretical frameworks (P6 Tuition and Facilitation of Learning).

An academic should engage students in all stages of the teaching process. In supervising student research, my department encourages use of decolonised methodologies and ICTs which facilitative active student engagements (P16 Science and Technology).

Similar contributions were also raised thus:

When I allow students to frame their research on African philosophical underpinnings, I empower them (P15 Science and Technology).

The contributions as revealed in the excerpts in this sub-theme show that academics need to establish positive relationships with their students on the various online and distance teaching and learning engagements. They need to engage in personal, complicated conversations as a way of deconstructing the master-servant relationship, which is perceived as perpetuating coloniality in subtle ways.

For the decolonisation of curriculum to be effective, academics must commit themselves to dismantle power relations between themselves and students. When academics commit themselves in such a way, they engage in both curriculum and pedagogical ways critically with self-reflexivity and imagination (Du Plessis 2021).

Findings about the need to dismantle the power relations between academics and students at the institution are closely aligned to literature on Canadian university contexts in which allowing students to reclaim their lost identities proved to be an effective decolonial pedagogical practice (Louie et al. 2017; cf. 3.2.1). The findings in this section are in tandem with studies by Jackson (2016), Martinez- Vergas (2020) and Nyamnjoh (2016) which advocate for collegiality and unity of students and academics in universities (cf. 3.2.1). At UNISA, positive relationships between supervisors and students are promoted through online platforms such as myUnisa

discussion forums and closed Facebook groups which promote virtual communities of students and staff where the students share, learn and discuss their problems and dissatisfaction with UNISA academics along their research journeys (Letseka, et al. 2018; Manyike 2017; Setlhodi 2021). I concur with Setlhodi (2021) and Mendy and Madiope (2020) that facilitation of learning through such online engagements shows that UNISA is taking responsibility to bridge the gap in access in an ODeL setting and promoting unity between students and their research supervisors. I however argue that there are hardships encountered by students who learn through ODeL at UNISA, especially in circumstances where socio-economic factors affect ability to access the internet because of lack of data or poor networks.

Disruption of the Western myth of positioning the supervisor as the 'all-knower' in research supervision discourse facilitates the reawakening of those who hold on to dominant Eurocentric ways so that they are accorded an opportunity to reflect upon and grasp what it is like to be regarded as a 'non-knower' in the learning processes (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). I therefore advocate for a CRT ontological and epistemological framework which serves to bring in social justice in teaching and learning in an ODeL context. I also contend that postgraduate student supervision can be a means to access and understand students who are faced with theories and epistemologies foreign to their cultural orientations (Msila and Gumbo 2016). Thus, where applicable, the use of non-Western theoretical underpinnings should be appreciated as an endeavour to make the pedagogical practices better for both students and their supervisors.

In the next section, findings are presented and discussed under the sub-theme which shows that decolonisation of the university curriculum is a process that should commence with decolonisation of the mind.

c) Decolonisation of the mind

In this sub-theme, I present and discuss findings from senior academics who perceive decolonisation of curriculum as deeply rooted in the decolonisation of minds of

curriculum designers, implementers and consumers and other university stakeholders. The following excerpt confirms this finding:

It entails Ngugi's concept of decolonising the mind. Then the question is "Whose mind should be decolonised?" then I say the mind of the student, academic, lecturer, university council, senate; in fact, the mind of every member of the university(P12 Human and Social Sciences).

Another participant said:

We must be able to deal with second generation colonialism which is entrenched in most of us as academics (P3 Science and Engineering).

This was supported by another academic who stated that:

Firstly, as academics, we should deal with our own mentalities and consciousness. We should ask ourselves if we are not alienated from our true identities (P6 Tuition and Learner Facilitation).

We must find a way forward to reconnect with our original identities (P5 Economic and Management Sciences).

In the same view, it was pointed out:

We should go beyond that and consider various perspectives then create the spaces to think of its value to us as an institution, as individuals, as academics in the classrooms , not forgetting the values of others, of course(P8 Language, Arts and Culture).

Similar views were shared by a participant who articulated thus:

It means rethinking the use of dominant ways of approaching curriculum which is normally informed by decontextualised Western framings that have little relevance to our context (P14 Science and Technology).

In further elaborating specific ways in which the minds of the stakeholders can be decolonised, several contributions were provided as confirmed in the following statements:

The academics, students and all the other university stakeholders should drive themselves towards borderline thinking (P11 African Languages).

In expressing why borderline thinking helps in decolonising the mind, it was indicated that:

We should ask ourselves in what ways are we still mentally colonised (P2 Leadership and Business).

In addition, another participant explained thus:

We should rethink our own thinking regarding knowledge and our being and unlearn to relearn (P4 Health Sciences).

It was also expressed thus:

The aim in decolonising the minds of stakeholders is for universities to acknowledge epistemological knowledges within diverse cultures then incorporate them into the curriculum (P16 Science and Technology).

Decolonising the mind eventually results in them rejecting the myth that there is only one universal truth about knowledge and being (P13 Early Childhood Education).

It is at reaching this stage that we can learn to accept that of course, knowledge systems outside Western worldviews are also valid (P9 Curriculum and Instruction).

Other participants responded thus:

Academics are creators and drivers of the curriculum, the one we want to decolonise. So, it is the same academics who are accountable for the base from which they look at the world, then form a common ground. That will inform curriculum developers and policy makers and those who teach in the classrooms (P9 Curriculum and Instruction).

My suggestion is for academics to rethink the conceptual framing for curriculum. This facilitates shared understanding (P11 African Languages).

The above findings allude to the need for the university staff to decolonise their minds first to be ready to design, deliver and assess a decolonised curriculum. The findings revealed the need for academics to interrogate their cognition, beliefs, values, worldviews and perceptions and evaluate if they are not assimilated to Western ways of thinking and knowing. Such interrogations become important as most academics, irrespective of cultural backgrounds, have developed Western ways of thinking and knowing throughout their schooling careers.

The findings about the need to disentangle their ways of thinking from mental slavery echo Nyoni (2019), who argues that effective decolonisation can be realised when those academics whose minds are still colonised accept that reality, then unlearn to learn. These findings are also in line with Datta (2018) who understands decolonisation as a continuous process of becoming, unlearning and relearning. The findings also align to WaThiongo (1994) and Tuck and Yang's (2018) suggestions that the first step in the decolonisation discourse is the decolonisation of the mind (cf. 2.2.3).

The findings further revealed that the decolonisation of the mind promotes the interrogation of knowledge bases and their relevance to the current South African context. There is an alignment between findings in this sub-section and literature reviewed which illuminates that decolonisation processes require stakeholders to critique their minds in relation to their identities, different knowledge systems and curriculum demands (Chaka et al. 2017; Fomunyam 2017; Grosfoguel 2007; Maldonado-Torres 2017; Mamdani 2018; WaThiongo 1994; cf. 3.3.1). Thus, I believe it is relevant to explore alternative ways on how additional knowledge bases could fit in the curriculum gap to promote a just and quality practice.

The decolonisation of the mind will enable UNISA stakeholders to realise that due to coloniality, indigenous and Western knowledges are positioned in a dichotomous way. African indigenous knowledges are labelled as inferior and Western knowledges as superior. This positioning privileges Westernised epistemes in the curriculum at the expense of indigenous knowledge systems which do not conform to Eurocentricism (Ladson-Billings 1998; Seyama 2019). The realisation of the dichotomous positioning of knowledge systems allows curriculum stakeholders to address decolonisation discourse more meaningfully. CRT is transdisciplinary and it illuminates the hegemonic capacity of Western knowledges in the South African university curriculum; hence it is a framework which helps in critiquing the dissonance which exists between indigenous and Western ways of knowing (Dixon and Rousseau 2005; Ladson-Billings 1998; Miller 2008). I contend that decolonisation of the minds of curriculum creators and implementers is an invaluable critical performativity, which must play a pivotal part in the endeavours to decolonise the curriculum (Seyama 2019).

In the next section, I present and discuss findings on the last main theme from senior academics which felt that IKS could be used as a tool to decolonise the curriculum.

5.4.2 The use of IKS as a tool to decolonise the university curriculum

The senior academics who participated in the study regarded decolonisation of university curriculum as transforming the curriculum content so that it includes the IKS. The main theme consists of three sub-themes: a) the use of indigenous languages to

support learning; b) challenges in using indigenous languages as medium of instruction; and c) reclaiming marginalised African scholarship. These sub-themes are discussed in the section below.

a) The use of indigenous languages to support learning

The finding from the online qualitative questionnaire with senior academics revealed that due to decolonisation agenda, the language policy in use accommodates the use of all eleven official South African languages at UNISA to support learners in their home languages. These are: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Siswati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu, English and Afrikaans. It was revealed thus:

It is important and imperative...a step in the right direction is that UNISA language policy approves the use of glossaries in the eleven the official languages in the student tutorial letters tutorial letters. A student will use the glossaries in his/her own home language in order to get better understanding of module content which is in English (P15 Science and Technology).

It was also indicated thus:

Parts of the curriculum are being Africanised in some sense since the South African indigenous languages are already being used to support learning at UNISA in some departments (P3 Science and Engineering).

Another participant went a step further and elaborated on the importance of using indigenous languages to support teaching and learning by revealing thus:

It will encourage an equal recognition of and development of all indigenous (local) languages as promulgated in the Constitution and other statutory frameworks. UNISA language policy in use accommodates provision of student support such as glossaries in all the eleven official languages (P16 Science and Technology).

Another participant expressed the advantage of recognition of indigenous languages to scaffold learning at UNISA and said:

In my opinion decolonisation brought about a new awareness of the value of the different languages, and that no language is superior to others (P1 Human and Social Sciences).

Another participant expressed thus:

The indigenous languages must be the vehicle to transform and support learning (P14 Science and Technology).

The use of indigenous languages as to scaffold or support learning was perceived as important as expressed below:

By recognising the South African indigenous languages, this university therefore underscores that South African local languages are bridges that are necessary for a culturally strong society that has linguistic pride and puts resources to enable it to flourish (P2 Leadership and Business).

The findings above are aligned to what the 2016 UNISA Language Policy articulates about the use of and role of multilingual education at the institution. The policy outlines that while recognising that all formal study material, formative and summative assessment and other tuition activities will be in English, student support will be offered in their own home languages. This is realised through a) compulsory multilingual glossaries in all eleven official languages, b) translation support for basic study material in all eleven official languages and c) tutorial support in all the official South African languages (UNISA 2016; cf. 5.2.1). The language policy further articulates that in accommodating other minority groups, it endeavours to be capacitated to provide learner support in form of South African Sign Language and that all the support should present in an ODeL context (UNISA 2016a).

The findings in this sub-theme are in tandem with findings from the postgraduate students who participated in this study who also advanced that use of indigenous languages to scaffold learning is evidence of decolonisation at work at UNISA (cf. 5.3.2.1). Similarly, Le Grange (2017) and Lebeloane (2018) assert that shifting from Western languages as the only medium of instruction is one way of confronting second generation colonialism which has decimated the value of indigenous languages. A pilot programme in the College of Education was planned for the use of nine South African languages to be used in teaching and learning in the Early Childhood Education Bachelor of Education. However, due to financial constraints, the pilot programme has been postponed to the year 2023.

The findings also echo Msila and Gumbo (2016) that education should be transformed, reconstructed and rewritten to embrace and celebrate diversity and multiplicity without essentialising any one knowledge system over another. I submit that since the 2016 UNISA Language Policy accommodates student support in form of glossaries in the eleven official languages of South Africa, (UNISA 2016a), UNISA is on the right track to promotion of equity in accessing education by all the indigenous South African students. The use of indigenous languages to scaffold learning is vital in facilitating knowledge production through one's own first language (Mampane and Omidire 2018).

Findings on indigenous languages as bridges for a culturally bound society, corroborate those of Le Grange (2016), Mendey and Madiope (2020) Shava and Manyike (2018) who argue that the use of indigenous languages as medium of instruction in a South African university context is an appropriate move in which the curriculum is legitimised as lived by its users (Garza and Ono 2016; Ladson- Billings 2009; Solórzano 1998; Yosso 2005). I am of the opinion that dominant linguistic cultural assumptions with regard to language, culture and value systems in curriculum are being interrogated at UNISA by the use of South African indigenous languages for student support purposes. Although the South African indigenous languages play subordinate roles, I argue that if their role continues to be developed in academia, the prestigious role of English may become a myth.

Although the senior academics pointed out that the decolonial agenda has resulted in the adoption of a language policy which accommodates use of indigenous languages to support learning at UNISA, they also highlighted challenges. The challenges faced in the implementation of indigenous languages for scaffolding and learning support are presented and discussed in the next section.

b) Challenges in using indigenous languages to support learning at UNISA

The 2016 UNISA 2016 Language Policy states that mother tongue based multilingual education to support all South African students studying at UNISA is the institution's ideal whose realisation may lie in future (UNISA 2016a). As its ultimate goal, practicable steps should be taken towards realisation of this goal in an ODeL context in which it is envisioned that students who learn in their home languages are generally more successful in their studies than when studying through an additional language. Although some senior academics expressed the view that the use of indigenous languages to scaffold learning at UNISA may be understood as a tool to transform or decolonise the curriculum, others pointed out the challenges associated with such a move. Participants raised the following issues:

UNISA lacks the capacity. It is expensive to run such programmes. More teaching- learning materials, more advanced technologies and more human resources will be needed (P6 Tuition and Facilitation of learning).

Furthermore, only considering South African official languages to scaffold learning excludes students who come from other countries (P4 Health Sciences).

Some academics and lectures and students are non-South Africans who don't know how to speak, read or write the South African indigenous languages (P12 Human and Social Sciences).

Divergent views were also raised:

We need lecturers and teachers that are taught and trained in the pedagogy of the mother tongue (P5 Economic and Management Sciences).

The bottom line is we need people who are keen to teach in these languages. Then another drawback is that the implementation of the language policy in an ODeL context is difficult when face to face interactions are not the order of the day as it is in face to face settings (P6 Tuition and Learning Facilitation).

The other participants expressed the challenges of using indigenous languages as medium of instruction could lead to alternative routes. It was suggested that:

We need to linguistically develop the languages for use as medium of instruction, but to begin with we do not have terminology in disciplines such as Sciences (P2 Leadership and Business).

But not all disciplines lend themselves to Africanisation. It is not clear, for example, what it would mean to “decolonise” Physics or Mathematics. There is only universal Mathematics – not European or African or Asian mathematics (P3 Science and Engineering).

Another suggestion was as follows:

We are still a long way back; there are so many things that need to be done in terms of developing African languages. We need to start from the grassroots levels of basic education and we also need to change people’s attitude as well (P7 Social Work).

The findings about challenges of using South African indigenous languages as medium of instruction allude to the expenses incurred in providing student support in multilingual South African mother tongue languages. According to the 2016 UNISA Language Policy, student support is to be offered in their home languages. This is realised through a) compulsory multilingual glossaries in all eleven official languages;

b) translation support for basic study material in all eleven official languages; and c) tutorial support in all the official South African languages (UNISA 2016).

The participants raised concerns that some students and academics lack competence in the eleven official languages of South Africa for effective implementation of the language policy. In line with the importance of developing the indigenous languages, Mazrui (1998) assert that policy initiatives which adopt an African language require expansion at lexical level. Thus, UNISA academics could record lessons in different South African languages then upload them on my modules as additional support for learning. Recorded lessons uploaded on the myUnisa sites such My Modules will enhance understanding of difficult terminologies which learners encounter when they engage with the curriculum content for particular modules in fields such as Mathematics, Science and Engineering.

When scaffolding learning is provided only in South African indigenous languages it implies that international UNISA students who use English as an additional language are marginalised as they do not get learner support in their own home languages. Similarly, Gwavaranda and Ndofirepi (2017) argue that not all Africans understand the indigenous languages which are used for teaching and learning. I highlight the plight of the international English additional language speakers enrolled at UNISA. In terms of provision of learner support, the Africanness of UNISA may be limited and questionable when its international students are marginalised in as far as scaffolding for learning in mother tongue glossaries and related support is concerned. I propose futurist student support which could be translated into other African languages such as Swahili, a language which is understood by many people in Africa. In providing such suggestions, I also emphasise that the issue of language support for international students who struggle with English is a complex matter which may need interrogation for further study.

In the next section, I present and discuss findings from the senior academics on the last sub theme: reclaiming the marginalised African scholarship as a tool to decolonise the university curriculum.

c) Reclaiming the marginalised African scholarship

The senior academics who participated in this study articulated that for decolonisation of the curriculum to be effective, the marginalised African scholarship should be reclaimed.

It was proposed:

I quote Ngugi waThiongo (2016), “We cannot afford to be intellectual outsiders in our own land. We must reconnect with the buried alluvium of African memory”. Yes, the knowledge base should mirror Africa, African based research, to be precise (P1 Human and Social Sciences).

In the same vein, another participant said:

We need to reclaim the marginalised African scholarship. That is where our students will draw from. Yes, they will use the African framed scholarship in their research as students (P10 Transformation and Leadership).

It was also suggested thus:

We should involve the histories of the formerly colonised or marginalised worldviews and knowledge systems. Then we use such underpinnings to imagine and frame alternative possibilities such as having a decolonised curriculum (P11 African Languages).

In discussing the reclaiming of African scholarship, it was revealed that African academics at UNISA have the responsibility to interrogate the global knowledge. This responsibility is illuminated in the excerpt below:

African academics this institution should interrogate the global knowledge economy and expose how it subtly carries forward the myth that Africa is peripheral to the Global North (P4 Health Sciences).

Another participant articulated a different reason for involving academics in African based research and stated:

The African academics should engage in scholarship which interrogates why Africans are informants to the Eurocentric researchers who will use the African information to theorise about us in ways that creates binaries between European and African knowledge systems (P12 Human and Social Sciences).

In addition, it was proposed:

The voices of different people/authors and opinions should be heard; therefore, the content should be decolonised to include the voices of African scholars (P1 Human and Social Sciences).

Another senior academic shared thus:

Content should be seen in its widest sense – including indigenous knowledge systems and research methods that are indigenous – based on theories such as Ubuntu. These African philosophies and content will assist African students to relate to the content (P15 Science and Engineering).

Another participant went further to express that at UNISA several academics have contributed to African scholarship;

At this institution, several academics have contributed by framing their research work on African philosophies and such invaluable research is treasured by many indigenous students (P16 Science and Engineering).

Findings presented in this section confirm literature that calls for open minded exploration of the deep entrenched theoretical epistemological, ontological and methodological assumptions which undergird curriculum design and implementation (Lange 2017; Lwandle and Yallem 2021; Modipa 2018). The application of open-

mindedness about curriculum issues has created a case for the indigenisation of the curriculum in decolonial discourses in Australian university contexts (Bodkin- Andrews 2018; Harvey and Russes- Mundine 2017). The proposed strategy to interrogate theoretical and methodological underpinnings are central to points raised by critical race scholars, such as Hoppers (2017), Ladson- Billings (1998), and de Sousa Santos (2018), who argue for the discussions on indigenisation of curriculum to be tackled from a culturally responsive contextual perspective.

The findings about the need to reclaim African scholarship are in tandem with scholars who advocate for scholarship by Africans, from Africa and on Africa as important in as far as such literature contextualises African epistemologies (Ramugondo 2019; Ratele et al. 2018). Thus, decolonial praxis in African studies will help to engage with intersectional inequalities (Spivak 1988; Solórzano and Yosso 2002). The strategy to reclaim marginalised scholarship can be understood as a call for reversal of stereotypes in which all forms of domination and eclecticism in studies in academia are eradicated (Kessi, Marks and Ramugondo 2020).

Academics and researchers at UNISA have contributed to the decolonial agenda. Literature confirms that at UNISA, academics are engaged in intense research into their teaching which promotes graduate employability and Africanisation of the learning content (Gumbo 2019; Higgs 2016; Mendy and Madiope 2020). Mendy and Madiope (2020:10) attest that diversified educational content is evident in colleges such as Law, Accounting, Education, Engineering and Technology and Economic Management Sciences.

In keeping with knowledge production on African scholarship, UNISA engages its Master's and Doctoral students in various webinars and conferences through Microsoft teams. The College of Graduate studies has been conducting a series of seminars in which participants engage in decolonising methodologies in research. There was also a new online Oxford-UNISA collaborative course for willing doctoral students on decolonising research methodologies held in April- May 2021. The collaborative course was a commitment course for diverse African students studying at UNISA and in other universities in countries such as Kenya, Cameroon and Ethiopia. Students

engaged in rethinking and unlearning Eurocentric methodologies and interrogated epistemic borders.

In conclusion the findings from the three data gathering instruments used namely; document analysis, individual semi- structured telephonic interviews and online qualitative questionnaires appears mostly aligned but with areas of conflict. The documents analysed for the purpose of this study illuminate that as an ODeL institution, UNISA conceptualises decolonisation of curriculum as a deep-rooted transformational ongoing process of eradicating discrimination by interrogating the geopolitics of knowledge and knowledge production. UNISA commits its academic staff to centre Africa in the scholarship of teaching and learning, research and all curriculum processes to promote social justice and equity in access to education and knowledge production. In its endeavours to decolonise the curriculum, UNISA uses an ODeL model which promotes the use of South African indigenous languages to scaffold learning to facilitate access to education through digital technological facilities and to subscribe to neoliberal global imperatives. I believe that as highlighted previously, the implementation of the transformation agenda cannot be achieved overnight, it is important to have time frames and a monitoring process in place to ensure that goals are met.

Findings from the postgraduate students highlight that a decolonised curriculum should be one in which Africa and other marginalised knowledges play central roles. The findings also emphasised that decolonisation of curriculum should extend to equal access to learning in the ODeL context through provision of financial support to all students who come from disadvantages backgrounds. Dismantling Eurocentrism in the curriculum was understood by the postgraduate students as a tool to promote the IKS and experiences as valid at UNISA, an institution which seeks to bridge the gap between the rich and poor by affording opportunities to students whose circumstances do not allow them to enroll at institutions where teaching and learning takes place at particular times and spaces, usually within the confines of the physical classroom.

The senior academics are well-versed with the curriculum transformation frameworks which were discussed in 5.2. They operate in the context of those guidelines as they

move forward. The senior academics however, revealed that for the decolonised frameworks and ODeL context in which they operate to be effectively implemented, they should decolonise their mindsets. To a larger extent, there is positive conversation between the curriculum transformation frameworks at UNISA and the engagements by the academics at the institution in their endeavors to implement a transformed curriculum in light of decolonisation demands.

There is confluence in findings from document analysis, semi- structured telephonic individual interview data and qualitative questionnaire data from the senior academics that for the curriculum at UNISA to be considered as decolonised, African content should be centred. However, findings from postgraduate students and senior academics have shown that they still anticipate more effort from the institution to implement a decolonised curriculum such as through deconstruction of master servant binaries between academics and students and more equitable funding of students. Thus, there is a gap in understanding of a decolonised curriculum from an ODeL perspective. The ODeL context can also perpetuate inequalities in access to education especially, to students who cannot afford digital technological resources. Thus, the decolonisation of curriculum at UNISA should consider digitalisation of curriculum content to become technologically relevant and equally accessible to all its students.

5.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented data from the empirical investigation. The emergent themes were described in accordance with the three data gathering tools used in this study, namely document analysis, semi- structured individual telephonic interviews and an online qualitative questionnaire. The document analysis framed the specific context in which the senior academics and postgraduate students who participated in this study are situated. The findings from the analysed data were presented and discussed using participants' actual words. In the presentation of the findings, the literature reviewed and the critical race theoretical framework discussed in chapters two and three were interwoven. The presentation of findings from the interviews and qualitative questionnaire was substantiated by participants' perceptions and experiences and the ensuing discussion was based on the responses regarding participants' perceptions

of decolonisation of university curriculum at UNISA. The themes revealed that decolonisation of university curriculum at the institution is conceptualised from different perspectives.

In Chapter 6, major findings, recommendations and conclusion are provided.

CHAPTER SIX

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the major findings of the study as discussed in preceding chapters. Further discussed in this chapter are recommendations as well as conclusions made based on the study findings.

The primary aim of this study was to explore perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa. I found it prudent to investigate the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the curriculum because the phenomenon of decolonisation is topical in postcolonial university contexts and in higher education around the world in general (Andrews 2019; Bhambra et al. 2018; Bird and Pitman 2019). This is as a result of indigenous and other marginalised students' dissatisfaction with lack of equity, access and success in higher education (Bhambra et al. 2018; Gopal 2019; Mamdani 2018; Mathebula 2019; Manathunga 2020; Morreira et al. 2020; cf. 3.2.1; 3.3.1). Higher education institutions in South Africa appear to have failed to transform their curricula resulting in the student protest movements of 2015- 2016. Amongst other grievances, protesting students demanded that the colonial curriculum be decolonised. Consequently, South African higher education responded to the student protests with the implementation of decolonised curricula. However, such implementation efforts were met with resistance from some academics who debated on what decolonisation should entail and how best to implement the decolonial project (Ammon 2019; Du Plessis 2021; Nyoni 2019; Stein and Andreotti 2016). It is against this background that this study sought to answer the main research question which is stated as follows: What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?

This major research question was broken down into the following sub-questions which guided this study:

1. How is the concept of the decolonisation of university curricula addressed in literature?
2. What steps have been taken towards curriculum transformation in higher education in South Africa since 1994?
3. What are the perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa?
4. What recommendations can be made to implement effective transformation of university curricula?

The methods of inquiry for this study included literature review, document analysis, an online qualitative questionnaire to elicit data from senior academics and individual, semi-structured telephonic interviews to gather data from postgraduate students who participated in this study. Data analysis was guided by the reviewed literature as key features of the decolonisation agenda and the CRT perspective.

A more detailed overview of the study is provided in the following section.

6.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section a summary of research findings is provided. The first section highlights findings from the reviewed literature in chapters two, three and four. This is followed by the discussion of findings from the empirical investigation.

6.2.1 Summary of the literature review

In chapter two, I discussed the conceptual framework and concepts such as decoloniality in higher education, decolonisation, Africanisation and curriculum transformation in order to explore the interconnectedness of these concepts and to contextualise my understanding of what decolonising the university curriculum entails (cf. 2.2.1; 2.2.2; 2.2.3). The conceptual framework also helped to situate the interpretations which I made in the application of CRT which underpins this study.

The results of the reviewed literature revealed that there is intersectionality amongst the following conceptual variables, decolonisation, decoloniality, coloniality, curriculum transformation and Africanisation of the curriculum. In postcolonial contexts, coloniality still exists in some individuals who believe that Western epistemologies are the only validated knowledges which should constitute the university curriculum (Mignolo 2011; Nyoni 2019; WaThiongo 1994; cf. 2.2.1; 2.2.2). There is therefore a need for a decolonial curriculum in order to recognise that non- Western knowledges systems are equally valid and to centre these in the university curriculum. The centring of non-Western knowledge system will result in meaningful curriculum transformation, which addresses injustices and imbalances created and sustained through epistemological racism (Mignolo and Walsh 2018; Schutte 2019; Tuck and Yang 2018; cf. 2.2.2; 2.2.3). Thus, the decolonisation of the curriculum can be achieved by centring African content or Africanising the curriculum, in the case of postcolonial university contexts in Africa.

Decolonisation of the curriculum at UNISA is viable as evidenced by my empirical investigation which has shown that the decolonisation of curriculum which is taking place seeks to restore, repatriate and validate the African and other marginalised knowledges at the centre of the curriculum. That is done to promote epistemic justice and equity in accessing education. Notwithstanding the utility of my conceptual framework, I am of the opinion that the promotion of equity of access may be hindered by socio-economic factors. Most students from economically disadvantaged families may not benefit much from decoloniality as they cannot afford technological or digital gadgets to access education through an ODeL model in use at UNISA.

Further discussed in chapter two is the CRT which underpins this study (cf. 2.3.1; 2.3.2). Specifically, I discussed Bell's (1980) interest convergence principle and Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995) theory. The CRT is based on five central tenets which are a) the centrality of race and racism; b) challenging dominant ideology; c) the importance of experiential knowledge; d) the use of interdisciplinary perspective; and e) a commitment to social justice (Bell 1980; Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Matsuda 1991; Mensah 2019; Solórzano and Yosso 2000; cf. 2.3.2.1; 2.3.2.2; 2.3.2.2; 2.3.2.3; 2.3.2.4; 2.3.2.5). The CRT started in the field of legal studies in the US and was later

applied to educational research to expose racial inequalities in educational institutions in America (Ladson- Billings and Tate 1995; Mensah 2019; Saetermoe et al. 2017; Sleeter 2017; cf. 2.3.2). Currently, CRT is used to frame studies in the field of education in postcolonial contexts (Adonis and Silinda 2021; Conradie 2016; Le Roux 2016; cf. 2.8).

I contend that the use of CRT to interrogate race related inequalities in the decolonisation of the curriculum at UNISA was relevant in my study. For example, I applied the centrality and permanency of racism in my study by linking it to the epistemic injustices which were adopted from the post-apartheid university system. The historical context as shown in my empirical investigation affirms that UNISA is operating in a post-apartheid context and is attempting to dismantle the adopted segregation apartheid policies. Thus, through CRT, I showed that decolonising the curriculum by validating the marginalised peoples' cultural, linguistic, and epistemological values can have a positive impact on the transformation of university curriculum. I however think that the validation of marginalised knowledge systems should be carried out through the creation of third spaces. These third spaces should embrace diversity in knowledges from different parts of the world to accommodate diverse kinds of students whose backgrounds are non-homogeneous. Although those who subscribe to CRT in education assert the theory's usefulness, I am of the opinion that to a limited extent, access and equity in education cannot be completely based on centring African content. I argue that there are other factors which contribute to inequality of access such as socio-political, economic and ideological factors. The South African government should play a pivotal role in improving the living conditions of economically struggling students. This will enable economically disadvantaged students to access higher education through an ODeL model such as that offered by UNISA.

In chapter three, I reviewed literature related to decolonisation of the university curricula in various countries. Amongst the selected regions were the UK, Canada, New Zealand and Latin America (cf. 3.2.1; 3.2.2; 3.2.3). This was followed by a discussion of some countries located in the Global South. In this regard related literature in countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Cameroon, Zimbabwe and

South Africa was discussed (cf. 3.3; 3.3.1). Also, discussed in chapter three is the South African higher education transformation trajectory since 1994 to situate this study in context (cf. 3.4; 3.5). The literature review which situates the study in context revealed that the university decolonisation project appears to be characterised by fears and resistance on the part of the stakeholders who are supposed to implement it (Amundsen 2019; De Santos 2018; Manathunga 2018; 2020; cf. 3.2.2). Furthermore, within the African university contexts, decolonisation attempts are implemented in rigged spaces as they are designed in the image of Western universities in their operations. This results in academics approaching the decolonisation project from different perspectives (Gukurume and Maringire 2020; Morreira et al. 2020; cf. 3.3.1). There is therefore a lack of mutual understanding amongst stakeholders such as students, academics, institutions, and governments which hampers effective implementation of the decolonisation project. The mutual relationships between and among university stakeholders are important for healing the coloniality wounds created by the subtle facets which manifest in public domains such as higher education systems in the post-colonial era (Chilisa 2017; Mbembe 2015; 2017). A decolonised curriculum promotes and validates formerly marginalised indigenous knowledge systems by centring them in the curriculum (Chilisa 2012).

In chapter four of this study, the research design and methodology for the empirical investigation were described and discussed. I discussed the ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological orientations which shape scientific research (4.2). On research methodology, I discussed the case study as the qualitative design which I used. I also provided details of my research profile and roles as a researcher to explicate how I guarded against interfering with the meaning of data obtained from both senior academics and postgraduate students (cf. 4.3.2; 4.3.3; 4.3.4). Chapter four further discussed the research site and sampling strategies used (cf. 4.3; 4.3.6.1; 4.3.6.2). Three data collection methods, namely document analysis, individual semi-structured telephonic interviews and an online qualitative questionnaire were also discussed (cf. 4.3.7.1; 4.3.7.2; 4.3.7.3). Data collection and analysis procedures were also presented (cf. 4.3.7; 4.3.8). Issues of trustworthiness were presented and discussed (cf. 4.3.9). In the last section of the chapter I discussed ethical considerations which I adhered to during the empirical investigation (cf. 4.4).

6.2.2 Summary of the empirical investigation

In chapter five, I presented and discussed findings from the empirical investigation. Data presentation and analysis for this study were in three phases. During the first phase I conducted document analysis. The following documents were selected for analysis: Integrated Transformation Strategy; UNISA 2030 Strategy; Vision and Mission Statement; 2018 Integrated Annual Report; 2019 Integrated Annual Report; 2016 Language Policy; ODeL Policy; and Student Funding Policy (cf. 5.2). the second phase entailed presentation and discussion of data from postgraduate students through individual semi-structured telephonic interviews (cf. 5.3) and in the last phase, I presented and discussed data from the senior academics from online qualitative questionnaire responses (cf. 5.4). The findings were discussed weaving in the theoretical framework, which is the CRT of Bell (1980) and Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and the literature reviewed in chapter 3. In the section below a summary of the findings from the empirical investigation is discussed according the research methods used to collect data.

6.2.2.1 Findings from document analysis

In this section I present major findings from the document analysis based on the various documents analysed to collect data for this study. The section below provides the main themes which emerged from document analysis.

a) Conceptualisation of transformation UNISA

The findings from document analysis revealed that UNISA understands the transformation of curriculum from a radical perspective. The institution intends to deal radically with epistemological, ontological and institutional racism or injustices which are entrenched in the academic model of organisation adopted from apartheid education (UNISA 2019a; 2016a; Mendy and Madiope 2020; Greyling et al. 2020; cf. 5.2.1). The results from document analysis revealed that UNISA's goal is to decolonise its curriculum by centring African and other marginalised content and by using student centred pedagogies through an exclusively ODeL model. Because the aim of the

institution is to promote epistemological diversity, the document emphasised that where applicable, Western epistemologies will still be relevant (cf. 5.2.1).

b) Operationalisation of the transformation agenda at UNISA

Findings revealed that the implementation of decolonisation or transformation of the curriculum is in progress at the UNISA. The institution introduced the Transformation and Leadership unit (Moropa 2021; UNISA 2018b; UNISA 2016a; cf. 5.2.2) to monitor the transformation project. This unit is tasked with the development of the transformational frameworks which will guide the transformation process. The document analysis results further revealed that the institution intends to establish a School of Languages. Currently the implementation of the university's language policy is monitored by the newly established Language Unit. The results further revealed that the Senate Language Committee monitors the implementation processes at an institutional level. The Senate Language Committee and the Language Unit monitors the implementation process of decolonising the curriculum in all the colleges and departments at the institution (Moropa 2021).

The findings also revealed that a student centred approach is employed in pedagogical practices. As part of the transformation agenda, student support materials are offered in all South African official languages. The results further revealed that the institution renamed its buildings as follows: the former AJH van der Walt Building is now called the Simon Radipere Building, Theo van Wyk Building was renamed Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and the third building, Samuel Pawl (the library), was renamed Lembede. The renaming of the buildings is also evidence of decolonisation (Chilisa 2012; UNISA 2019b:7).The significance of renaming is that it is a process which promotes an institutional culture which is supportive to the indigenous Africans by appreciating contributions by Africans. Renaming is also a way to illuminate the relationship between the stalwarts and the struggle for the attainment of education by all young people in South Africa (cf. 5.2.2).Findings also revealed that the institution aspires to provide services to its African clientele. Such aspiration is realised through centring African content in the curriculum, using South African indigenous languages to support learning and collaborating with other African universities without

essentialising the African epistemologies at the expense of other knowledge systems (UNISA 2016a; UNISA 2019a).

c) Challenges encountered in implementing the curriculum transformation agenda at UNISA

The findings showed that the process of decolonising or transforming the curriculum at the ODeL institution is marred by challenges (Luckett et al. 2019:34; UNISA 2020a; UNISA 2019a; cf. 3.5; 5.2.3). Global challenges which affect the world are also felt at institutional level. Thus, the finding from the document analysis revealed that the institution is compelled to subscribe to global imperatives such as producing graduates who are competitive at global level.

Another challenge is that UNISA has to transform its students learning styles to conform to the ODeL model, which requires students to access education through digital technologies. It is still a challenge for the institution to meet this requirement since there are many students who stay in areas with poor internet connectivity. One of the challenges UNISA is currently experiencing is that it operates within a historically post-apartheid country in which most public domains are marked by imbalances and injustices which must be overcome (UNISA 2020b). UNISA acknowledges the impact of COVID-19 on its operations which resulted in the need to expand its ICTs and taking care of the health of its staff (UNISA 2020b).

6.2.2.2 Findings from the individual semi-structured interviews with the postgraduate students

The major findings from the interviews with postgraduate students are summarised below.

a) Conceptualisation of the decolonisation of university curriculum

Findings revealed that postgraduate students understand decolonisation of university curriculum in three distinctive ways. Firstly, they understand it as the removal of unfair

Western oriented content elements which restrict students from learning effectively (cf. 5.3.2.1a). Secondly, they consider decolonising the curriculum to entail dismantling institutional culture and power relations which promote systemic racism. These findings confirm those of Stein and Andreotti (2017) and WaThiongo (1994) who argues for the removal of unfair Eurocentric norms and practices in the curriculum. Furthermore the CRT claims that the decolonised curriculum should be disentangled from a view of Eurocentric knowledge as the objective reality because the world has diverse kinds of valid knowledges (Harris 1995; Ladson-Billings 2005; cf. 2.2.1; 5.3.2.1). The findings also revealed that the relationships between academics and students in the various ODeL processes should transform to mutual cooperation characterised by *ubuntu* values to enable the academics and students to work together as co-owners of the curriculum programmes and initiatives offered at the institution (cf. 5.3.2.1b). The findings further suggest that inequality in the funding system should be decolonised to promote equal access to education to all students. There is therefore a need for further research to interrogate the funding system (cf. 5.3.2.1c).

- b) The use of indigenous languages as a tool to decolonise the curriculum

The results revealed three sub-themes which are: a) adoption of new university language policy at UNISA; b) English hegemony at UNISA; and c) the use of local histories and cultures to transform the curriculum. The hegemony of English is still evident at the institution in that despite the use of South African indigenous languages to scaffold learning, English is still the primary medium of teaching and learning at the institution. However, the 2016 UNISA Language Policy which accommodates the use of indigenous languages for student support and scaffolding is a means of decolonising the UNISA curriculum (UNISA 2016a: 4; cf. 5.3.2.2a). The findings suggest that postgraduate students conducting research could use of indigenous languages to write their research dissertations and theses as a way of promoting decolonisation (Madadzhe 2019; UNISA 2016a: 4; cf. 5.3.2.2). The institution's values are illuminated in its endeavour to Africanise and indigenise the institution by centring African culture and local values (UNISA 2019a; cf. 5.2.2; 5.2.3). That is evidence of the

institution's validation of local histories and culture to transform it from being Western-dominated.

While some postgraduate students perceive the hegemony of English as promoting linguistic imperialism, others revealed that promotion of indigenous languages as medium of instruction to decolonise the curriculum will limit UNISA graduates' opportunities for survival in the globalised village (cf. 5.3.2.2b).

6.2.2.3 Findings from online qualitative questionnaire responses by senior academics

The major findings from the online qualitative questionnaires from senior academics are summarised in the following subsections.

a) Conceptualisation of the decolonisation of university curriculum

Findings revealed three sub-themes which are: a) dismantling Eurocentricism in the curriculum; b) decolonising power relations between academics and students at UNISA; and c) decolonising the mind. The senior academics understand the concept of the decolonisation of university curriculum as the dismantling of Eurocentric elements in the current curriculum by centring valid African or non-Western knowledges while acknowledging relevance of other knowledge systems were relevant (cf. 5.3.2.2; 5.4.1.1). Thus they share similar perceptions with various scholars who define the term as a means to emancipate themselves from the yokes of foreign knowledge systems (Stein and Andreotti 2017; cf. 2.2.1). The findings further revealed that the process of dismantling is sometimes characterised by resistance. It is thus imperative that stakeholders responsible for designing and implementing a decolonised agenda be aware of the possibilities of such eventualities.

Findings revealed that involving students in module development, validating diverse students' cultural values and allowing students to frame research work on relevant non-Western paradigms and methodologies of choice are means of decolonising power relations between academics and students. The use of digital facilities such as

myUnisa, closed Facebook pages, Microsoft Teams and Moodle were indicated as possible ways of transforming the university curricula (Letseka et al. 2018; Manyike 2017; Setlhodi 2021; 5.4.1). The findings further showed that the decolonisation of the institution's curriculum requires effort and hard work on the part of academics to be able to mutually engage their students in the pedagogical practices (5.4.1).

The findings also revealed that the initial stage in the decolonisation agenda should be for academics to be ready to decolonise their own minds. That resonates with literature which affirms that when academics are engaged in interrogating possibilities of coloniality in their being, they will in turn practise borderline thinking (Mignolo 2009; Nyoni 2019; Tuck and Yang 2018; WaThiongo 1994; cf. 2.2.3). They will develop an appreciation of knowledges produced outside Western hegemonies as valid, resulting in academics' ability to design and deliver a decolonised curriculum (5.4.1.3).

b) Use of indigenous languages to decolonise university curriculum

Findings from three sub-themes namely: a) the use of indigenous languages to support learning; b) challenges in using indigenous languages to support learning; and c) reclaiming marginalised African scholarship are summarised below.

The findings revealed that the use of South African indigenous languages to scaffold learning is plausible to facilitate their development for use in academia. Using South African indigenous languages to support learning was also revealed as a way of decolonising linguistic racism, although international students who do not know those languages are disadvantaged by such a development. These findings confirm those of Le Grange (2017) and Lebeloane (2018) who are of the view that the use of African languages as medium of instruction in higher education will enhance their status. Dismantling linguistic racism enhances academic success among most indigenous language students who struggle due to language related challenges (5.4.2.1).

However, findings further revealed several challenges encountered when indigenous languages are used as media of instruction, such as huge sums of money required for implementation. The results further affirm indigenous language hierarchies thus

showing that some indigenous languages have fewer speakers making their use of primary language of instruction a challenge (Gwavaranda and Ndofirepi 2017). The results further revealed that not all academics are proficient in all indigenous South African official languages. Finally, it was revealed that these languages are not fully developed for use as medium of instruction (cf, 5.4.2.2). Despite these challenges, there is a need to find solutions as most of these are cited as a way of furthering English hegemony.

Findings further revealed that marginalised African scholarship should be reclaimed as a way of decolonisation. These findings are in tandem with literature which asserts that reclaiming the African scholarship creates spaces to design curriculum content based on African philosophies (Marks and Ramugondo 2020; Ramugondo 2019; Ratele et al. 2018; cf. 5.4.2). Findings also showed that by reclaiming African paradigms and theories and placing them at the centre of the curricula result in the shifting of Western theories and pedagogical approaches from the centre which they currently occupy. In their place will be indigenous pedagogical methodologies which serve to bring social and cognitive justice in the curriculum processes (5.4.2.3).

6.3 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

6.3.1 Contribution to participants

The research participants (senior academics and the postgraduate students) benefited from participating in this study as challenges of the decolonisation of the university curriculum were highlighted. The research provided opportunities to both the senior academics and postgraduate students to reflect on their perceptions of the decolonisation of university curriculum. It further provided them with an opportunity to reflect on the strategies which could be used to implement a decolonised curriculum in an ODeL institution such as UNISA. They were thus able to realise the gaps that exist in the implementation of a decolonised curriculum at their institution, in the institution's language policy, indigenous knowledge systems and canons of African thought and other marginalised epistemologies. Through their participation the

research participants became aware of the complexities around the decolonisation agenda.

6.3.2 Contribution to theory

This study was underpinned by Bell's (1980) CRT theory of interest convergence principle and Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995) CRT of education and their propositions about the five central tenets of CRT. The five CRT tenets are described as: the centrality of race and racism, the challenge to dominant ideology, an interdisciplinary perspective, the importance of experiential knowledge and a commitment to social justice (Bell 1980; Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Love 2018; Matsuda 1991; Mensah 2019; Solorzano and Yosso 2000).

The findings from document analysis, semi-structured interview and online qualitative questionnaire data corroborate the usefulness of the CRT as a means of exploring and interrogating some epistemological racism in the curriculum processes at UNISA. Using the CRT tenet of experiential knowledge, senior academics and postgraduate students who participated in this study were accorded platforms to speak and tell their stories by sharing their perceptions on decolonisation of the university curriculum with typical examples from their own experience. Issue of the hidden curriculum or institutional cultures is an area of concern to a CRT scholar. The empirical study findings revealed that master-servant relationships between academics and students disempower students by sorting them as less-knowers. Such labels reinforce student counterproductive, negative experiences which could be resolved through the creation and implementation of curricula which accommodate the lived experiences of minoritized groups.

Apart from interrogating constructs such as race, class and gender, the study has highlighted that the university curriculum needs to reflect a broader concern for all its students. Thus, the interrogation of geopolitics of knowledge production and identity is pivotal in as far as it contributes to curriculum transformation for social and cognitive justice. The CRT lenses used in this study centres racism in epistemologies and pedagogies adopted from the apartheid and Eurocentric thought. This study makes

contribution to the CRT by challenging the dominant perspective of Eurocentricism in curriculum discourses at an ODeL institution in South Africa. Its other contribution to CRT in an ODeL context lies in its identification of the gap which eLearning and teaching creates in widening the divide between students from rich and poor financial backgrounds.

Origins of CRT are rooted in the US and I expanded its application into a post-apartheid context which is a different context in terms of historical background and experiences. Transforming the curriculum through decolonisation of the mind and centring African content and pedagogy in teaching at UNISA fulfils the CRT tenet of commitment to social justice for students from marginalised backgrounds. Through semi-structured individual telephonic interviews, an online qualitative questionnaire and qualitative document analysis, this study has succeeded to value and harness the experiential knowledge of both senior academics and postgraduate students who participated in this study. In addition, the study drew from the apartheid historical context of UNISA, cultural and linguistic landscapes and multilingual pedagogy which provided some background to the application of CRT to discuss the findings.

Although the proponents of CRT glorify the CRT tool of analysis of race related issues, its use in analysing decolonial studies in education may have its own limitations. For example, there is an overemphasis of Westernised epistemologies as dominant ideologies which should be dismantled to promote cognitive justice to marginalised students. I contend that due to internationalisation of education, students from the Global North may enroll at universities in the Global South where decolonisation will be implemented. Such students may also suffer from being marginalised if their IKS are made peripheral in the curriculum. I further argue that in using CRT to frame studies, it is important for researchers to unpack its limitations. Thus, my use of CRT to frame this study may be used as a point of reference by other interested researchers.

In the next section, I provide recommendations which may help to improve practice.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICE

The conclusions made in this study were drawn from the related literature reviewed in chapters two and three, and the empirical data presented and discussed in chapter five of this study. It was in the context of these conclusions that the following recommendations are made. In light of those findings, I recommend the following for the improvement of practice:

1. Academics should be the frontline agents of change for the success of the decolonial project; hence every academic, lecturer or tutor at UNISA needs to interrogate themselves in relation to diverse knowledges, pedagogical approaches and the cultural diversity of students they serve in order to design and deliver a truly decolonised curriculum in an ODeL context.
2. The findings revealed paucity in social justice with regard to academic-students' power relationships, therefore academics should commit to decolonise their teaching and supervision approaches in ways which accommodate students' valid experiences in their learning in an ODeL context. Decolonising power relations is important in an institution such as UNISA where different students from different countries around the world are studying. Establishing mutual relationship between supervisors and students will enhance academic success and reduce dropout rates
3. There should be more research output premised on indigenous methodologies and postgraduate students should be encouraged to frame their studies on indigenous paradigms.
4. Since the postgraduate students appeared to be unaware of some of the specifics of the UNISA Language policy and its implementation processes, the institution should ensure that all the students studying at the institution are aware of it. This could be made possible sharing the language policies with each registered student at the beginning of their first year of study

The next section is on the recommendations for future research

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Notwithstanding the challenges faced, the limitations of the study and the awareness that no single study can provide all answers to questions about perceptions on decolonisation of the university curriculum, I recommend the following further studies be conducted:

1. More studies should be conducted on appropriate policy frameworks which can guide and facilitate decolonisation of the ODeL university curriculum.
2. Further CRT studies should propose social justice in the curriculum development processes which in turn promote equality in and equity of access to education.
3. IKS research on use of indigenous languages as media of teaching and learning could be conducted.
4. There is need to conduct further research on the student funding process at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels to establish if there is equity and justice. Studies could be conducted using either qualitative, quantitative or mixed method approaches.

6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

My study was a case study which involved sixteen senior academics and twelve postgraduate students at an ODeL institution. Although the qualitative form of inquiry is known for its provision of rich data, its methodological limitations include the complexity of the design which calls for extended time and effort (Creswell 2014). There may also be a certain risk of researcher subjectivity in a qualitative study, although rigorous measures were taken to guard against bias interfering with the research findings.

This study involved a small sample, that is, sixteen senior academics and twelve postgraduate students. Because of the small sample size and uniqueness of the university in which the study took place, the results may not be generalised to other senior academics and postgraduate students in other South African universities.

However, although the phenomenological design designates a small study sample, this study focused on the perceptions of a few individuals in an effort to infer aspects of the phenomenon of decolonisation of the university curriculum at the institution. I contend that while it may not be appropriate to make broad generalisations, the reality of interests resides in the senior academics and postgraduate student participants. I told their stories through their voices, perspectives, lived experiences and understanding. Above all, I presented data on what the lived experiences revealed in relation to the research questions.

6.7 CONCLUSION

This study explored perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of the university curriculum at an ODeL institution in South Africa.

Centring African epistemologies in the curriculum to liberate it from over-reliance on Eurocentricism was highlighted as the meaning of decolonisation of the university curriculum in the context of South Africa. African epistemologies can play a pivotal role in the curriculum processes through use of language policies which promote IKS and indigenous languages. The use of African philosophies as part of curriculum content was also understood as a way of decolonising the curriculum at UNISA. However, due to the multilingual nature of the South African society and that of international students studying at UNISA, the challenges of promoting indigenous language policies were underscored. There is thus a realisation that centring African indigenous knowledges in the curriculum is a complicated process hence caution should be taken to guard against essentialising certain languages at the expense of others. The findings conclusively highlighted the advantages of centring Africa while realising that non-African epistemologies should be accommodated whenever relevant. Thus, considering the aim of the study and the findings which have been presented and discussed, the main objectives of the study were achieved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, D. L. 2017. Implementation of school wide positive behaviour supports in the neo-liberal context of an urban elementary school. Unpublished PhD Phil. Special Ed. University of Syracuse, New York.
- Adu, P. 2019. *A Step-by-Step Guide to Qualitative Data Coding*. London: Routledge.
- African Union (AU). 2007. *African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*. Addis Ababa: African Union.
- Ajjawi, R. & Higgs, J. 2007. Using hermeneutic phenomenology to investigate how experienced practitioners learn to communicate clinical reasoning. *The Qualitative Report*, 12 (4), 612-638.
- Albertus, R. W. & Kar-wai Tong, 2019. Decolonisation of institutional structures in South African universities: A critical perspective. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 5(1).doi: 1080/23311886.2019.1620403.
- Alexander, N. 2013. *Thoughts on the new South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.
- Almeida, S. & Kumalo, S. H. 2018. (De)coloniality through indigeneity: Deconstructing calls to decolonise in the South African and Canadian university contexts. *Education as Change*, 22(1), 1–24.
- Ament, J. R. & Perez V. C. 2015. Linguistic outcomes of English medium instruction programmes in higher education: A study on economics graduates at a Catalan University. *Higher Learning Research Community*, 5 (1), 47- 68.
- Ammon, L. 2019. Decolonising the university curriculum: A case study of the University of the Free State. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Free State, Bloemfontein.
- Amundsen, D. 2019. Māori transitions to tertiary education. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Waikato, Hamilton.
- Andrews, K. 2019. Blackness, empire and migration: How black studies transforms the curriculum. *Area*, 52(4), 701-707, DOI: 10.1111/area.12528.
- Angu, P. E., Boakye, N. & Eybers, O. O. 2020. Rethinking the teaching of academic literacy in the context of calls for curriculum decolonization in South Africa. *The International Journal of Pedagogy and Curriculum*, 27(1), 1-16, DOI: 10.18848/2327-7963/CGP/v27i01/1-16.

- Anney, V. N. 2014. Ensuring the Quality of the Findings of Qualitative Research: Looking at Trustworthiness Criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 5 (2), 272- 281.
- Antwi, S. K. & Hamza, K. 2015. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Paradigms in Business Research: A Philosophical Reflection. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7(3), 217- 226.
- Aoki, T. 1999. Rethinking curriculum and pedagogy. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, Summer, 180–181.
- Apple, M. W. 1993. The politics of official knowledge: Does a national curriculum make sense? *Teacher College Record*, 95(2), 222- 241.
- Apple, M. W. 2004. *Ideology and Curriculum*. (3rd edition). New York: Routledge.
- Apple, M. W. 2018. Critical curriculum studies and the concrete problems of curriculum policy and practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 50(6), 685- 690.
- April, K. 2019. Coloured professionals have a harder time succeeding in senior management roles. *Cape Argus*. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/opinion/coloured-professionals-have-a-harder-time-succeeding-in-senior-management-roles-19853799>(Accessed: Day Month Year). Accessed: 20 September 2020.
- Ashu, F.E. 2020. Decolonising the curriculum at Cameroonian universities: The case of education foundation and administration. *African Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(5), 13- 39.
- Badat, S. 2017. *Trepidation, longing, and belonging: Liberating the curriculum at universities in South Africa*. Public lecture series on curriculum transformation matters: The decolonial turn. University of Pretoria.
- Baijnath, M. 2017. Engaging with transformation of the humanities at an English medium research-intensive South African university: Decolonisation and academic agency in an era of uncertainty. Unpublished Master of Social Science dissertation. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.
- Bhabha, H. K. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. , London: Routledge.
- Bell, D. 1980. Brown vs. Board of Education and the interest-convergence dilemma. *Harvard Law Review*, 93(3), 518-533, DOI: 10.2307/1340546_
- Bell, D. 1992. Racial realism. *Connecticut Law Review*, 24(2), 363-379.

- Bell, D. 2004. *Silent Conversations: Brown v. Board of Education and the Unfulfilled Hopes for Racial Reform*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bhambra, G. K., Gebrial, D., Nişancıoğlu, K. 2018. *Decolonising the University*. London: Pluto Press.
- Bhopal, K. 2015. Race, identity and support in initial teacher training. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, (63)2, 197-211.
- Biko, S. 2004. *I Write What I Like*. Johannesburg: Picador Africa.
- Bird, K.S. and Pitman, L. 2019. How diverse is your reading list? Exploring issues of representation and decolonisation in the UK. *Higher Education*, 1-18.
- Blackburn, H. 2017. The status of women in STEM in higher education: A review of the literature 2007–2017. *Science & Technology Libraries*, 36(3), 235-273, DOI: 10.1080/0194262X.2017.13711658.
- Bobbitt, F. 1918. *The Curriculum*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. 2015. More than prejudice: Restatement, reflections, and new directions in critical race theory. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, (1)1, 73–87.
- Bourdieu, P. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of Judgement and Taste*. London: Routledge.
- Bowen, G. A. 2009. Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27- 40.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. 2006. Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77- 101.
- Bryman, A. 2012. *Social Research Methods*. (4th edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Castagno, A. E.& Lee, S. J. 2007. Native Mascots and Ethnic Fraud in Higher Education: Using Tribal Critical Race Theory and the Interest Convergence Principle as an Analytic Tool. *Equity and Excellency in Education*, 40(1), 3-13.
- Chaka, J. G. & Govender, I. 2017. Students' perception and readiness towards mobile learning in colleges of education: A Nigerian perspective. *South African Journal of Education*, 37(1), 1-12. DOI: 10.15700/saje.v37n1a1282.

- Chaka, C., Lephala, M. & Ngesi, N. 2017. English studies: Decolonisation, deparochialising knowledge and the null curriculum. *Perspectives in Education*, 35(2), 208–229.
- Charles, E. 2019. Decolonising the curriculum. *Insights*, 32(1) 24. DOI: /10.1629/uksg.475.
- Check, J. & Schutt, R. K. 2012. Survey research. In: Check, J. & Schutt, R.K. (eds.). *Research methods in education*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE, pp. 159- 185.
- Chiappa, R., & Finardi, K. R. 2021. Coloniality prints in internationalisation of higher education: The case of Brazilian and Chilean international scholarships. *SOLT IN THE SOUTH*, 5(1), 25- 45.
- Chilisa, B. 2012. *Indigenous Research Methodologies*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Chilisa, B. & Kawulich, B. 2012. Selecting a research approach: Paradigm, methodology and methods. In C Wagner, B Kawulich & M Garner, *Doing social research: a global context*, 51- 61.
- Chilisa, B. 2017. Decolonising transdisciplinary research approaches: An African perspective for enhancing knowledge integration in sustainability science. *Sustainability Science*, 12(5), 813–827. DOI: 10.1007/s11625-017-0461-1.
- Chikoko, V. 2021. Re-visiting the decolonising of South African higher education: A systemic literature review. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 35(1): 21- 36.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. 2000. *Research Methods in Education*. (5th edition). London; Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2011. *Research Methods in Education*. (7th edition). London: Routledge.
- Cohen. L., Manion. L. & Morrison. K. 2018. *Research methods in education*. (5th edition). London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2020. *Research Methods in Education*. (6th edition). London: Routledge.
- Cole, M. 2017. *Critical Race Theory and Education: A Marxist Response*. (2nd Edition). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Colgan, J. 2017. Gender bias in international relations graduate education? New evidence from syllabi. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 50(2), 456-460, DOI: 10.1017/S1049096516002997.

- Conradie, M.S. 2015. Each colour in its own place: Positioning whiteness in South Africa through the race talk of undergraduate students. *Race, Gender, Class*, 22(1-2), 275-295.
- Conradie, M. S. 2016. Critical race theory and the question of safety in dialogues on race. *Acta Theologica*, 36(1), 5- 26. .
- Corbin, J, & Strauss, A. 2008. *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks; Sage.
- Cortes, C. E. 1991. Empowerment through media literacy. A multicultural approach. In: Sleeter, C. E. (ed.). *Empowerment Through Multicultural Education*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 143-157.
- Council on Higher Education (CHE). 2013. *A proposal for undergraduate curriculum reform in South Africa: The case for a flexible curriculum structure*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.
- Council on Higher Education (CHE). 2016. *South African Higher Education Reviewed. Two Decades of Democracy*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.
- Crenshaw, K. W. 1988. Race, reform, and retrenchment: Transformation and legitimation in antidiscrimination law. *Harvard Law Review*, 101(7), 1331-1387.
- Crenshaw, K. W. 2011. Twenty years of critical race theory: Looking back to move forward. *Connectus Law Review*, 43(5) 1253- 1352.
- Crenshaw, K. W. 1991. Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of colour. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6),1241-1299.
- Creswell, J. W. 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W. 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (4th edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W. & Clark, V. L. 2011. *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Crowder, P. A. 2014. (Sub)Urban Poverty and Regional Interest Convergence. 98 *Marq. Law Review*, 98(2), 763.

- Cummins, J. 2010. Bilingual and immersion programs. In: Lang, M. & Doughty, C. (eds.). *The handbook of language teaching*. Malden: Wiley Blackwell, pp. 161-181.
- Cupples, J. & Grosfoguel, R. (eds.). 2019. *Unsettling Eurocentrism in Westernized University*. London: Routledge.
- Darder, A., Torres, R. D. & Baltodano, M. (eds.). 2003. *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Datta, R. 2018. Decolonising both researcher and research and its effectiveness in indigenous research. *Res Ethics*, 14, 1- 24.
- Davids, N. 2016. On extending the truncated parameters of transformation in higher education in South Africa into a language of democratic engagement and justice. *Transformation in Higher Education*, 1(1), 1- 7.
- De La Garza, A.T. & Ono, K. A. 2016. Critical Race Theory. In: Bruhn, K, Jensen & Craig, R. T. . (eds.). *The National Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*, Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Delgado, R. 1990. When a story is just a story: Does voice really matter? *Virginia Law Review*, 76(1), 95- 111.
- Delgado, B. D. 2002. Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 105- 126.
- Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. 2017. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. (3rd edition). New York: New York University Press.
- Department of Education (DoE). 2002. *Language Policy for Higher Education*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2012. *Green paper for post- school education and training*: Pretoria: DHET.
- Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). 2014. *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post School System*. Pretoria: Department of Higher Education.

- Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). 2015. *The 2015 Durban Statement on Transformation in Higher Education*. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/speeches/2015-durban-statement-transformation-higher-education-17-oct-2015-0000> (Accessed: 9 September 2019).
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2019. 2000- 2016 *First time entering undergraduate cohort studies for public higher education institutions*. Pretoria: DHET.
- DHET. 2020. *The Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions*. Pretoria: DHET.
- Desai, Z. 2016. Learning through the medium of English in multilingual South Africa: Enabling or disabling learners from low income contexts? *Comparative Education*, (52)3, 343- 358.
- De Silva, R. M, Gleditsch, R., Job, C., Jesme, S., Urness, B. & Hunter, C. 2018. Gloria Ladson- Billings; Igniting Student Learning Through Teacher Engagement in Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Multicultural Education*, 25(3- 4), 23- 28.
- De Sousa Santos, B. 2016. Epistemologies of the South and the future. *From the European South*, 1, 17–29.
- De Sousa Santos, B. 2018. *The End of the Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South*. London: Duke University Press.
- Dewey, J. 1910. *How We Think*. Boston: Heath.
- Dixson, A. D. & Rousseau, C. K. 2005. And we are still not saved? Critical Race theory in education ten years later. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8,7-27.
- Donnelly, M. & Evans, C. 2018. A 'home-international' comparative analysis of widening participation in UK higher education. *Higher Education*, 77, 97- 114.
- Du Plessis, P. 2021. Decolonisation of education in South Africa: Challenges to decolonise the university curriculum. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 35(1), 54- 69.
- Du Preez, P., Simmonds, S. & Verhoef, A. 2016. Rethinking and researching transformation in higher education: A meta-study of South African trends. *Transformation in Higher Education*, 1(1), 1-7

- Du Preez, P. 2018. On decolonisation and internationalisation of university curricula: What can we learn from Rosi Braidotti? *Journal of Education*, 74, Special Issue, 19- 31.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. 1935. *Black Reconstruction in America: Toward a History of The Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. New York: Routledge.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. 1969. *The Souls of Black folk*. New York: New American Library.
- Eckerdal, J. R. & Hagstrom, C. 2017. Qualitative questionnaires as a method for information studies research. *Information Research*, 22(1), 1- 14.
- Edgeworth, K. 2015. Black bodies, white rural spaces: Disturbing practices of unbelonging for 'refugee' students. *Critical Studies in Education*, 56(3), 351–365. DOI:10.1080/17508487.2014.956133.
- Fanon, F. 1963. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fanon, F. 1952. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Groove Press.
- Fataar, A. 2018. From the shadows to the university's epistemic centre: Engaging the (mis)recognition struggles of students at the post-apartheid university. *Higher Education Close Up*, 13(4) 359-373.
- Felder, P.P. & Barker, M. J. 2013. Extending Bell's concept of interest convergence: A framework for understanding the African American doctoral student experience. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 8, 1- 20.
- Fine, B. 2018. *The Political Economy of South Africa: From Minerals-Energy Complex to Industrialization*. New York: Routledge.
- Flick, U. 2009. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Foucault, M. 1991. *Discipline and Punish: the birth of a prison*. London: Penguin.
- Freire, P. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Seabury.
- Fylkesnes, S. 2018. Whiteness in teacher education research discourses: A review of the use and meaning-making of the term cultural diversity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 71, 24- 33. DOI: [10.1016/j.tate.2017.12.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.12.005).
- Garcia, N. M., López, N. & Vélez, V. N. 2018. QuantCrit: Rectifying quantitative methods through critical race theory. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 21(2), 149-157. DOI:10.1080/13613324.2017.1377675.

- Garuba, H. 2015. 'What is an African curriculum?' mail and Guardian, 17 April. Accessed on 16 October 2020). <http://mg.co.za/article/2015-04-17-what-is-an-african-curriculum/>
- Garza, A. T. & Ono, K. A. 2016. Critical race theory. In: Author/Eds. *The international Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*. New Jersey: Wiley and Sons, 1- 9.
- Gaudry, A. & Lorenz, D. 2018. Decolonization for the masses? Grappling with indigenous content requirements in the changing post-secondary environment. In: Tuck, E. Yang, K. W. & Smith, L. T. (eds.). *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education*. London: Routledge, 159- 174
- Geduld, D. & Sathorar, H. 2016. Leading curriculum change: Reflections on how Abakwezeli stoked the fire. *South African Journal of Education*, 36(4), 1-13.
- Gerasmos, T. (ed.). 2020. *Decolonising the Curriculum- School of Government*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
- Ghaddar, J. J., & Caswell, M. 2019. To go beyond: Towards a decolonial archival praxis. *Arch Sci*, 19, 71–85. DOI: 10.1007/s10502-019-09311-1.
- Gibbons, M., Limoges, C., Nowotny, L., Schwartzman, S., Scott, P. & Trow, M. 1994. *The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Gillborn, D. 2008. *Racism and Education: Coincidence or Conspiracy*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Gillborn, D. 2009. Who's afraid of critical race theory in education? A reply to Mike Cole's, 'The color-line and the class struggle'. *Power and Education*, 1(1), 125–131.
- Gillborn, D. 2010. Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing? A reply to Dave Hill's 'Race and class in Britain: A critique of the statistical basis for critical race theory in Britain'. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, 8(1), 79–107.
- Gillborn, D. 2015. The monsterization of race equality: How hate became honourable. In: Alexander, C., Weekes-Barnard, D. & Arday, J. (eds.). *The Runnymede School Report: Race. Education and Inequality in Contemporary Britain*. London: Runnymede.

- Giloi, S. 2017. The Benefits of Incorporating a Decolonised Gaze for Design Education. *Design Education Forum of Southern Africa*, 14th National Design Education Conference 2017, 83- 93.
- Giroux, H. 2004. *The Terror of Neoliberalism. Authoritarianism and the Eclipse of Democracy*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
- Giroux, H. 2010. Rethinking Education as the Practice of Freedom: Paulo Freire and the promise of critical pedagogy. *Policy Futures in Education*, 8(6), 715-721.
- Gitomer, D. H. & Crouse, K. 2019. *Studying the Use of Research Evidence: A Review of Methods*. New York: William T. Grand Foundation.
- Goar, C. 2015. Universities 'De-Colonize' their Courses and Campuses. *Toronto Star*. 7 July 2015. Available at: <https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2015/07/07/universities-decolonize-their-courses-and-campuses-goar.html> Accessed: 4 March 2017).
- Goduka, N. & Chilisa, B. (eds.). *Locating African voices and Worldviews within the Academy*. eZiko siPheka siSophula; National Library of South Africa's Centre for the Book.
- Gopal, P. 2017. Yes, we must decolonise: Our teaching has to go beyond elite white men. *The Guardian*. 27 October 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/27/decolonise-elite-white-men-decolonising-cambridge-university-english-curriculum-literature> (Accessed on 20 June 2021).
- Grant. C. & Osanloo. A. 2014. Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: Creating the blueprint for your 'house'. *Administrative Issues Journal Education Practice and Research*, 4(2), 12-26 DOI: 10.5929/2014.4.2.9.
- Gray, D. 2014. *Doing Research in the Real World*. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Green, H. 2014. Use of theoretical and conceptual frame-works in qualitative research. *Nurse Researcher*, 21(6), 34-38.

- Greyling, L. E., Huntley, B., Reedy, K. & Rogaten, J. 2020. Improving distance learning mathematics modules in South Africa: A learning design perspective. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 34(3), 89- 111.
- Grosfoguel, R. 2007. The epistemic decolonial turn: Beyond political-economy paradigms. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2), 211-223.
- Grosfoguel, R. 2011. Decolonizing post-colonial studies and paradigms of political-economy: Transmodernity, decolonial thinking and global coloniality. *Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(1), 1–38.
- Grosfoguel, R. 2013. The structure of knowledge in Westernized universities: Epistemic racism/sexism and the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th Century. *Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, 11(1), 73-90.
- Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S. 2005. Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences. In: Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 191–215.
- Guba, E. G. 1990. *The Paradigm Dialog*. California: SAGE.
- Guzman- Valenzuela, C. 2021. Disrupting curricula and pedagogies in Latin American universities: six criteria for decolonising the university. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 26(7-8), 1019- 1037.
- Gukurume, S. & .Maringire, G. 2020. Decolonising sociology: Perspectives from two Zimbabwean universities. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 5(1), 60-78..DOI:10.1080/23802014.2020.1790993.
- Gumbo, M. 2019. Online or offline? Postgraduate supervisors state their position at University of South Africa. *South african Journal of Higher Education*, 33(1), 92- 110.
- Gyamera, O. G. 2015. The Internationalization Agenda: A critical Examination of Internationalization Strategies in Public Universities in Ghana, *Internationalization Studies in Sociology of Education*, 25(2), 112- 131.
- Hall, B. L. & Tandon, R. 2017. Decolonization of knowledge, epistemicide, participatory research and higher education. *Research for All*, 1(1), 6–19. DOI: 10.18546/RFA.01.1.02.
- Harris, C. 1995. Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review*, 106(8), 1707-1791.

- Heleta, S. 2016. Decolonisation of higher education: dismantling epistemic violence and Eurocentrism in South Africa. *Transformation in Higher Education*, 1(1), 1–8.
- Heleta, S. 2018. Decolonizing knowledge in South Africa: Dismantling the ‘pedagogy of big lies’. *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*, 40(2), 47–65.
- Higher Education South Africa (HESA). 2014. ‘*South African Higher Education in the 20th year of democracy: Contexts, achievements and key challenges*’. Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training, Cape Town, 5 March.
- Hlatshwayo, M. N. 2018. I want to be confident to build an argument: An exploration of the structure of knowledge and knowers in Political Studies. Unpublished PhD thesis. Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- Hlatshwayo, M., Shawa, L. & Nxumalo, S. 2020. Ubuntu currere in the academy: A case study from the South African experience. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 5 (1-2), 120-136, DOI:10.1080/23802014.2020.1762509.
- Hochschild, J. L. 1995. *Facing up to the American dream: Race, class, and the soul of the nation*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Hoppers, C. & Richards, H. 2011. *Rethinking thinking: Modernity’s ‘other’ and the transformation of the University*. Pretoria: UNISA Press.
- Hoppers, C. 2017. *Of sediments and trails in decolonizing the curriculum: A transformative response from an African perspective*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Howard, T. C. & Navarro, O. 2016. Critical race theory 20 years later: Where do we go from here? *Urban Education*, 51(3), 253–273. DOI:10.1177/0042085915622541.
- Hubble, S. & Bolton, P. 2018. International and EU students in higher education in the UK FAQs. Unpublished report. House of Commons Library, London.
- Hurst, E. 2016. Navigating language: Strategies, transitions and the ‘colonial wound’ in South African education. *Language and Education*, 30(3), 219–234.
- Hylton, K. 2009. *‘Race’ and Sport: Critical Race Theory*. London: Routledge.
- Isaacs, T. 2016. Critical student agency in education practice: A South African perspective. Unpublished PhD thesis. Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch

- Jackson, N. 2016. Review of Francis B. Nyamnjoh, #RhodesMustFall: Nibbling at resilient colonialism in South Africa. *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography*, 8, 1-11.
- Jansen, J. D. 2017. The lost scholarship of changing curricula. *South African Journal of Science*. 113, (5), 1-2. DOI: 10.17159/sajs.2017/a0209.
- Jansen, J. D. (ed.) 2019. *Decolonisation in Universities: The Politics of Knowledge*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Johnson, R. B. 2009. Toward a More “Scientific Research in Education”. *Educational Researcher*, 38 (6), 449- 457.
- Jordan, C. 1985. Translating culture: From ethnographic information to educational program. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 16 105-123.
- Kahu, E.R. & Nelson, K. 2018. Student engagement in the educational interface: Understanding the mechanisms of student success. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 37(1), 58-67.
- Kamal, S.S.L.B.A. 2019. Research paradigm and the Philosophical Foundations of a Qualitative study. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(3), 1386-1394.
- Kaushik, V. & Walsh, C. A. 2019. Pragmatism as a research paradigm and its implication for social work research. *Social Sciences*, 8(9), 1- 17.
- Keet, A., Sattarzadeh S. D. & Munene, A. 2017. An awkward, uneasy (de) coloniality higher education and knowledge otherwise. *Education as Change*, 21(1), 1–12. DOI: 10.17159/1947-9417/2017/2741.
- Kerr, P. & Luescher, T. M. 2018. Students’ experiences of university life beyond the curriculum. In: Ashwin, P. & Case, J. M. (eds.). *Higher Education Pathways: South African Undergraduate Education and the Public Good*. Cape Town: African Minds, pp. 216- 231.
- Kessi, S., Marks, Z. & Ramugondo, E. 2020. Decolonizing African Studies. *Critical African Studies*, 12(3), 271- 282.
- Kgobe, P. & Baatjes, I. 2014. White Paper on post-school education and training: Some new policy directions. *Post-School Education Journal*, 1(1), 2-4.

- Khalifa, M. A., Khalil, D., Marsh, T. E. J., and Halloran, C. 2019. Toward an Indigenous, Decolonizing School Leadership: A Literature Review. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 55(4), 571-614.
- Khoza, S. B. & Biyela, A. T. 2019. Decolonising technological pedagogical content knowledge of first year mathematics students. *Education Journal of Technology*, 25, 2665- 2679. DOI: 10.1007/s10639-019-10084-4.
- Kohli, R. 2009. Critical race reflections: Valuing the experiences of teachers of colour in teacher education. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 12(2), 235-251.
- Kohli, R. 2012. Racial pedagogy of the oppressed: Critical inter-racial dialogue for teachers of colour. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(10), 181-196.
- Kohli, R. & Solorzano, D. G. 2012. Teachers please learn our names! Racial microaggressions and the K-12 classroom. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 15(4), 441-462.
- Kohli, R. 2014. Unpacking internalized racism: Teachers of colour striving for racially just classrooms. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 17(3) 367-387.
- Kohli, R. 2018. Behind school doors: The impact of hostile racial climates on urban teachers of colour. *Urban Education*, 53(3), 307–333.
- Koopman, O. 2018. Towards decolonising teaching strategies: How to domesticate and infuse Western science with indigenous knowledge. *Journal of Education*, 74,102- 116.
- Kozol, J. 2005. *The shame of a nation: The return of apartheid schooling in America*. New York: Crown.
- Kumalo, S. H. 2020. Resurrecting the black archive through the decolonisation of philosophy in South Africa. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 5(1), 19-36. DOI: 10.1080/23802014.2020.1798276.
- Kumasi, K. 2011. Critical Race Theory and Education: Mapping a Legacy of Scholarship and Activism. In Levinson, B. A. U. (ed.), *Beyond Critique: Critical Social Theories and Education*, Boulder, CO; Paradigm Publishers. 196- 219.
- Kumasi, K. 2012. Roses in the concrete: A critical race perspective on urban youth and school libraries. *Knowledge Quest*, 40(5), 32-37.

- Ledesma, M. & Calderon, D. 2015. Critical race theory in education: A review of past literature and a look to the future. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(3), 206-222. 10.1177/1077800414557825.
- Ladson-Billings, G. 1998. Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 7-24.
- Ladson-Billings, G. 2005. The evolving role of Critical Race theory in educational scholarship. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 115-119.
- Ladson-Billings, G. 2009. *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. New Jersey: John Wiley.
- Ladson- Billings, G. 2013. Critical Race Theory- What it is Not! *Handbook of Critical Race Theory in Education*. Routledge
- Ladson-Billings, G. & Tate, W. F. 1995. Toward a Critical Race Theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, 97(1), 47-68.
- Lange, L. 2017. 20 Years of higher education curriculum policy in South Africa. *Journal of Education*, 68, 31–58.
- Laenui, P. 2009. Process of decolonization. In M Battiste (ed.). *Reclaiming indigenous voice and vision*, 150- 160. Vancouver, Canada: UBC Press.
- Ledesma, M. C. & Calderon, D. 2015. Critical race theory in education: A review of past literature and a look to the future. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(3), 206-222.
- Le Grange, L. 2016. Decolonising the university curriculum. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 30(2), 1- 12. DOI:10.20853/30-2-709.
- Le Grange, L. 2018. Decolonising, Africanising, indigenising and internationalising curriculum studies. *Journal of Education*, 74, 4- 18.
- Leonardo, Z. 2015. Contracting Race: Writing, Racism and Education. *Critical Studies in Education*, 56(1), 86–98. DOI: 10.1080/17508487.2015.981197.
- Le Roux, A. 2016. The teaching context preference of four white South African pre-service teachers: Considerations for teacher education. *South African Journal of Education*, 36(1), 1- 11.
- Leshem, S. & Trafford, V. 2007. Overlooking the conceptual framework. *Innovations. Education and Teaching International*, 44(1), 93-105. DOI: 10.1080/14703290601081407.

- Letseka, M. 2016. *Open Distance Learning (ODL) through the Philosophy of Ubuntu*. New York: Nova Publishers.
- Letseka, M., Letseka, M. M. & Pitsoe, V. J. 2018. The challenges of E- learning in South Africa. *Trends in E-learning*
- Li, D. 2004. Trustworthiness of think- aloud protocols in the study of translation processes. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14 (3), 301- 313.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. 1985. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. 2013. *The Constructivist Credo*. California: Left Coast Press.
- Lobo, M. 2020. Decoloniality: Seeding pluriversal imaginaries. *Postcolonial Studies*, 23(4), 575- 578. DOI: 10.1080/13688790.2020.1751424.
- Lopez, G.R. 2003. The (racially neutral) politics of education: A critical race theory perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 39(1), 68-94.
- Longhurst, R. & Jones, A. 2018. Enhancing higher education curricula: A case study from the University of Waikato, New Zealand. *London Review of Education*, 16 (2), 268–278. DOI: 10.18546/LRE.16.2.07.
- Love, D. 2018. Critical race theory and its impact on African-American student retention. *Scholar Journal of Applied Sciences and Research*, 1(7), 5-8.
- Louie, D. W., Pratt, Y. P., Hanson, A. J. & Ottmann, J. 2017. Applying indigenizing principles of decolonizing methodologies in university classrooms. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 47(3), 16–33.
- Luckett, K. & Shay, S. 2017. Re-framing the curriculum: A transformative approach. *Critical Studies in Education*, 61(4), 1-16. DOI: 10.1080/17508487.2017.1356341.
- Luckett, K., Morreira, S. & Baijnath, M. 2019. Decolonising the curriculum: Re-contextualisation, identity and self-critique in a post-apartheid university. In: Quinn, L. (ed.). *Re-Imagining Curriculum: Spaces for Disruption*. Stellenbosch: African Sun Media, 23- 44.
- Lynn, M. 1999. Toward critical race pedagogy a research note. *Urban Education*, 33(5), 606-626.
- Lynn, M., & Parker, L. 2006. Critical race studies in education: Examining a decade of research on US schools. *The Urban Review*, 38(4), 257-290.

- Madadzhe, R. N. 2019. Using African languages at universities in South Africa: The struggle continues. *Stellenbosch Papers in LinguisticsPlus*, 58 (Issue), 205- 218.
- Mazrui, A. A., & Mazrui, A. M. 1998. *The Power of Babel: Language and Governance in the African Experience*. London: James Currey Ltd.
- McNabb, D. 2019. Decolonising social work education in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Advances in Social Work & Welfare Education*, 21(1), 35-50.
- Mahabeer, P. 2018. Curriculum decision-makers on decolonising the teacher education curriculum. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4), 39- 50. DOI: 10.15700/saje.v38n4a1705.
- Mahabeer, P. 2020. Decolonising the school curriculum in South Africa: Black women teachers' perspectives. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 5(1), 97-119. DOI: 10.1080/23802014.2020.1762510.
- Maine, K. & Wagner, C. 2021. Student voices in studies on curriculum decolonisation: Ascoping view. *Psychology in Society*, 61, 27- 53.
- Makombe, G. 2017. An Expose of the Relationship between Paradigm, Method and Design in Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(12), 3363- 3382.
- Maldonado-Torres, N. 2007. On the coloniality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2), 240-270.
- Maldonado-Torres, N, 2017. On the coloniality of human rights. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, 114, 117- 136. DOI: 10.4000/rccs.6793.
- Mamdani, M. 2016. Between the public intellectual and the scholar: Decolonisation and some post-independence initiatives in African higher education. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 17(1), 68- 83.
- Mamdani, M. 2018. The African University. *London Review of Books*, 40(14), 29- 32.
- Mampane, R. M., Omidire, M. F. & Aluko, F. R. 2018. Decolonizing higher education in Africa: Arriving at a glocal solution. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4), 1–9. DOI:10.15700/saje.v38n4a1636.
- Manathunga, C. 2018. Decolonising the curriculum: Southern interrogations of time, place and knowledge. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the South*, 2(1) 95-111.

- Manathunga, C. 2019. 'Timescapes' in doctoral education: the politics of temporal equity in higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 38(4) 1227-1239. DOI: 10.1080/07294360.2019.1629880.
- Manathunga, C. 2020. Decolonising higher education: Creating space for Southern knowledge systems. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the South*, 4(1), 4- 25.
- Manyike, T. V. 2017. Postgraduate supervision at an open distance e-learning institution in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, (2), 1-11 DOI: 10.15700/saje.v37n2a1354.
- Maringira, G. & Gukurume, S. 2017. Being black in #FeesMustFall and #FreeDecolonisedEducation: Student protests at the University of the Western Cape. In: Langa, M. (ed.). *#Hashtag: An Analysis of the #FeesMustFall Movement at South African Universities*. Johannesburg: CSV.R.
- Martinez- Diaz, E. 2017. "Are universities ready for interculturality? The case of the Intercultural University "Amawtay Wasi" (Ecuador)". *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 26(1), 73- 90.
- Mathebula T. 2019. African Philosophy (of Education) and Decolonisation in Post-apartheid South African Higher Education. In: Manthalu C., Waghid Y. (eds) *Education for Decoloniality and Decolonisation in Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15689-3_1
- Mato, D. 2016. 'Indigenous people in Latin America: Movements and universities: Achievements, challenges, and intercultural conflicts'. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(3), 211- 233.
- Mashiya, N. F., Meda, L. & Swart, A. 2020. Lecturer conceptions of and approaches to decolonisation of curricula in higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 34(2), 142- 163.
- Masipa, T. 2018. South Africa's transition to democracy and democratic consolidation: A reflection on socio-economic challenges. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 18(4), e1713. DOI:10.1002/pa.v18.4.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. 2016. *Designing Qualitative Research*. (6th edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

- Martinez-Vargas, C. 2020. Decolonising higher education research: From a university to a pluri-versity of approaches. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 34(2), 112- 128.
- Mathebane, M. & Sekudu, J. 2018. Decolonising the curriculum that underpins social work education in South Africa. *Southern African Journal of Social Work and Social Development*, 30(1), 1- 19.
- Mathebula, T. 2019. African philosophy (of education) and decolonisation in post-apartheid South African higher education. In: Manthalu C. H. & Waghid Y. (eds). *Education for Decoloniality and Decolonisation in Africa*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Matias, C. E. & Zembylas, M. 2014. 'When saying you care is not really caring': emotions of disgust, whiteness ideology, and teacher education. *Critical Studies in Education*, 55(3), 1- 19. DOI: 10.1080/17508487.2014.922489.
- Matsuda, M. 1991. Voices of America: Accent, anti-discrimination law, and a jurisprudence for the last reconstruction. *Yale Law Journal*, 100(5), 1329-1407.
- Mayaba, N. N., Ralarala, M. & Angu, P. 2018. Student voice: Perspectives on language and critical pedagogy in South African higher education. *Educational Research for Social Change*, 7(1), 1-12. DOI: 10.17159/2221-4070/2018/v7i1a1.
- Maxwell, J. A. 2012. *A Realist Approach for Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Maxwell, J. A. 2013. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Mbembe, A. 2015. Decolonizing knowledge and the question of the archive. *Platform for Experimental Collaborative Ethnography*, *Platform for Experimental Collaborative Ethnography*. Available at: <https://worldpece.org/content/mbembe-achille-2015-%E2%80%9Cdecolonizing-knowledge-and-question-archive%E2%80%9D-africa-country> (Accessed: 20 June 2021).
- Mbembe, A. 2016. Decolonising of the university: New directions. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 15 (1), 29-45.

- Mbembe, A. 2017. *Critique of Black Reason*. Translated by Dubois, L. Durham: Duke University Press.
- McKaiser, E. 2016. Epistemic injustices: The dark side of academic freedom. *Independent Online (IOL)*. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/epistemic-injustices-the-dark-side-of-academic-freedom-2029747> (Accessed: 17 June 2016).
- McKinney, C. 2017. *Language and Power In Post-Colonial Schooling: Ideologies in Practice*. New York: Routledge.
- McMillan, J. H. & Schumacher, S. 2014. *Research in Education: Evidence-based Inquiry*. Harlow: Pearson Higher Ed.
- McMillan, J. H. 2016. *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. Boston: Pearson.
- Mensah, F. M. 2016. Positional identity as a framework to studying science teacher identity: Looking at the experiences of teachers of colour. In: Avraamidou, L. (ed.). *Studying Science Teacher Identity: Theoretical Perspectives, Methodological Approaches and Empirical Findings*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, pp. 49–69.
- Mensah, F. M. & Jackson, I. 2018. Whiteness as property in science teacher education. *Teachers College Record*, 120(1), 1-38.
- Mensah, F. M. 2019. Finding voice and passion: Critical race methodology in science teacher education. *American Educational Journal*, 20(10). 1- 45.
- Merriam, S. B. 2009. *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B. & Tisdell, E. J. 2016. *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. (4th edition). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Mertens, D. M. 2015. *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology*. (4th edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Mgqwashu, E. 2016. Universities can't decolonise the curriculum without defining it first. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/universities-cant-decolonise-the-curriculum-without-defining-it-first-63948> (Accessed: 2 August 2017).

- Mheta, G., Lungu B.N. & Govender, T. 2018. Decolonisation of the curriculum: A case study of the Durban University of Technology in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4): 1635-1642. DOI: 10.15700/saje.v38n4a1635. [.](https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v38n4a1635)
- Mignolo, W. 2000. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mignolo, W. 2009. Coloniality: The darker side of modernity. In: Breitwieser, S., Klinger, C. & Mignolo, W. (eds.). *Modernologies. Contemporary Artists Researching Modernity and Modernism*. Barcelona : Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona , pp. 39-49.
- Mignolo, W. 2011. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Mignolo, W. D. 2015. Sylvia Wynter: What does it mean to be human. In: McKittrick, K. (ed.). *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human As Praxis*. London: Durham University Press, pp. 106-123.
- Mignolo, W. & Walsh, C. 2018. *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Milner, H. R. 2008. Critical race theory and interest convergence as analytic tools in teacher education policies and practices. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59(4), 332–346.
- Milner, H. R. 2013. Analyzing Poverty, Learning and Teaching Through a Critical Race Theory Lens. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1), 1- 53.
- Milner, R., Pearman, A. & McGee, E. 2013. Critical race theory, interest convergence and teacher education. In: Lynn, M. & Dixson, A. (eds.). *Handbook of Critical Race Theory in Education*. Abingdon: Routledge, 339- 354.
- Mheta, G. Lungu, B, N. & Govender, T. 2018. Decolonisation of the curriculum: A case study of the Durban University of Technology in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4), 1-7. DOI: 10.15700/saje.v38n4a1635.
- Mkhize, D. & Balfour, R. 2017. Language rights in education in South Africa. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 31(6), 133-150.

- Morreira, S., Lockett, K., Kumalo, S.H. & Ramgotra, M. 2020. Confronting the complexities of decolonising curricula and pedagogy in higher education. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 5(1- 2), 1- 18. DOI: 10.1080/23802014.2020.1798278.
- Morreira, S., Taru, J. & Truyts, C. 2020. Place and pedagogy: using space and materiality in teaching social science in Southern Africa. *Third World Thematics: A TWO Journal*, 5(1), 1- 17.
- Mugume, T. 2020. *The 2020 UFS Transformation Review Week in brief- Have your say!* University of the Free State. Available at: <https://www.ufs.ac.za/Transformationweek> (Accessed: 13 May 2021). Unpublished report. University of Free State, Bloemfontein.
- Moropa, K. 2021. 'African Languages as languages of learning and Teaching (LoLT) at Unisa'. *Unisa Teaching and Learning Festival: Unisa*. Pretoria. 6 May.
- Morrow, S. L. 2005. Quality and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research in Counseling Psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 25(2), 250-260.
- Munyaradzi, J. 2019. Perceptions of students and lecturers on English as a primary medium of instruction at a university in South Africa. Unpublished M Ed. Dissertation. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Musitha, M. E. & Mafukata. M. A. 2018. Crisis of decolonising education: Curriculum implementation in Limpopo Province of South Africa. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 6(1), 1–8. DOI: 10.4102/apsdpr.v6i1.179.
- Musundire, A & Mumanyi, O. 2020. Exploring challenges, opportunities and prospects associated with higher education student funding in the context of South Africa. *Journal of Management Administration*, 1, 101- 122.
- Muswede, T. 2017. Colonial legacies and the decolonisation discourse in post-apartheid South Africa. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(5), 200- 210.
- Mzangwa, S. T. 2019. The effects of higher education policy on transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Cogent Education*, 6(1), 1- 15.

- Naidoo, L. A. 2016. Contemporary student politics in South Africa: The rise of the black-led student movements of #RhodesMustfall and #FeesMustfall. In: Heffernan, A. & Nieftagodien, N. (eds.). *Students Must Rise, While Youth Struggle in South Africa Before and Beyond Soweto '76*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Naidoo, M., 2016. Overcoming alienation in Africanising theological education. *HTS Teologiesie Studies/Theological Studies*, 72(1),) 2072-8050 . DOI: 10.4102/hts.v72i1.3062.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2015. Ali A Mazrui on the invention of Africa and postcolonial predicaments: 'My life is one long debate'. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(2), 205–222. DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2015.1013317.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2017. Decolonising research methodology must include undoing its dirty history. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/decolonising-research-methodology-must-include-undoing-its-dirty-history-83912> (Accessed 26 September 2017).
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2019. Provisional notes on decolonizing research methodology and undoing its dirty history. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 35(4), 481-492. DOI: 10.1177/0169796X19880417.
- Ndlovu- Gatsheni, S. J. 2021. Internationalisation of higher education for pluriversity: a decolonial reflection. *Journal of British Academy*, 9(1), 77- 98.
- Ngwenya, C. 2019. Decoloniality and higher education transformation in South Africa. In: Manthalu C. & Waghid Y. (eds). *Education for Decoloniality and Decolonisation in Africa*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 111- 123.
- Nkrumah, K. 1965. *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization and Development with Particular Reference to the African Revolution*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Ndofirepi, A. 2017. African universities on a global ranking scale: Legitimation of knowledge hierarchies? *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 31(1), 155-174.
- Ngubane- Mokiwa, S. A. 2017. Implications of the University of South Africa's shift to open distance e-learning on teacher education. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 42(9), 111- 124.

- Ngulube, P. 2018. Overcoming the difficulties associated with using conceptual and theoretical frameworks in heritage studies. In: Ngulube, P. (ed.). *Handbook of Research on Heritage Management and Preservation*. Hershey: IGI Global, 1-23.
- Ngulube, P. 2021. Post graduate supervision practices in Education Research and the creation of opportunities for knowledge sharing. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*, 79(2), 255- 272.
- Nguyen, T. T. L. 2019. Selection of research paradigms in English language teaching: Personal reflections and future directions. *The Second Annual International Conference on Language and Literature*, 1-19. DOI 10.18502/kss.v3i.4826.19
- North West University. 2018. Curriculum Transformation Framework for North West University. Unpublished report. North West University, Potchefstroom.
- Nyamnjoh, F. B. 2016. *#RhodesMustFall: Nibbling at Resilient Colonialism in South Africa*. Bamenda: Langaa RPCIG.
- Nyoni, J. 2019. Decolonising the higher education curriculum: An analysis of African intellectual readiness to break the chains of a colonial caged mentality. *Transformation in Higher Education*, 4(0), a69. DOI: 10.4102/the.v4i0.69.
- Okesina, M. 2020. A critical review of the relationship between paradigm, methodology, design and method in research. *Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 10 (3), 57- 68.
- O'Leary, Z. 2014. *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*. (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Omi, M. & Winant, H. 1986. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. New York: Routledge.
- Onwuzuruigbo, I. 2018. 'Indigenising Sociology "The captive mind" and five decade of sociology in Nigeria. *Current Sociology*, 66(6), 831- 848.
- Orange, C., Calman, R. & Parkin, J. 2017. *Te Tiriti o Watangi = The Treaty of Waitangi, 1840*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.

- Owusu, B. E. 2021. Decoloniality and Higher Education Transformation in Ghana. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Sciences*, 4(3), 77- 85.
- Oyedemi, T. 2018. (De)coloniality and South African academe. *Critical Studies in Education*, 1- 17.
- Padayachee, K., Matimolane, M. & Ganas, R. 2018. Addressing curriculum decolonisation and education for sustainable development through epistemically diverse curricula. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32(6), 288- 304.
- Palomino, P. 2019. On the Disadvantages of “Global South” for Latin Americans. *Journal of World Philosophies*, 4(2), 22- 39.
- Parsons, J. & Harding, K. 2011. Research Reflections About When Schools Work Well: Twenty-one Specific Activities for Improving Schools. *e-Journal of Organizational Learning and Leadership*, 9(1), 97-108.
- Patton, M. Q. 2002. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Phillipson, R. 1992. *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Phillipson, R. 2006. Language policy and linguistic imperialism. In: Ricento, T. (ed.). *An Introduction To Language Policy: Theory And Method*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 346- 361.
- Pietkiewicz I. & Smith J.A. 2014. A Practical Guide to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Phenomenological Analysis in qualitative research psychology. *Psychological Journal*, 20(1), 7 – 14.
- Pillay, S. R. 2016. Silence is violence: (Critical) psychology in an era of Rhodes must fall and fees must fall. *South African Journal of Psychology*. 46(2), 155–159. DOI: 10.1177/0081246316636766.
- Pinar, W. F. 2004. *What is Curriculum Theory?* (1st edition). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pinar, W. F. 2010. On the internationalisation of curriculum studies. In: Pinar, W. F. (ed.). *Curriculum Studies in South Africa: Intellectual Histories and Present Circumstances*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 221–242.
- Pinar, W. F. 2011. *What Is Curriculum Theory?* (2nd edition). New York: Routledge.

- Pinar, W.F. 2012. *What Is Curriculum Theory?* (3rd edition). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pinar, W. F. (ed.). 2014. *International Handbook of Curriculum Research*. (2nd edition). New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Pinar, W. F. 2015. *Education Experience as Lived: Knowledge, History and Alterity*. New York: Routledge.
- Prah, K. K. 2004. African Wars and Ethnic Conflicts: Rebuilding Failed States. The Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society. Unpublished Africa Regional Background Paper: Human Development Report, Cape Town.
- Pratt, P. Y., Louie, D., Hanson, A. & Ottmann, J. 2018. *Indigenous Education and Decolonization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Quijano, A. 2000. Coloniality of Power and Euro-centrism in Latin America. *International Sociology*, 15(2), 215–232.
- Quinn, L. (ed.). 2019. *Re-imagining Curriculum: Spaces for Disruption*. Stellenbosch: African Sun Media.
- Quraish, M. & Philburn, R. 2015. *Researching Racism: A Guidebook For Academics and Professional Investigators*. London: SAGE.
- Ramugondo, E. L. 2018. Healing work: Intersections for decoloniality. *World Federation of Occupational Therapists Bulletin*, 74(2), 83- 91.
- Ramathan, L. 2016. Beyond counting the numbers: Shifting higher education transformation into curriculum spaces. *Transformation in Higher Education* 1(1), a6. DOI: 10.4102/the.v1i1.6.
- Ratele, K., Cornell, J., Helman, R., Malherbe, N., & Titi, N. 2018. What antiracist psychology does and does not (do). *South African Journal of Psychology*, 50(3), 296- 300.
- Rawatlal, R. & Dhunpath, R. 2015. Transcending the Econometric Discourse in Curriculum Design: Multi-trajectory Progression Planning. *Alternation Special Edition*, 16(2) 94-114.
- Ravitch, S.M. & Riggan, M. 2017. *Reason and rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research*. (2nd edition). London: SAGE.
- RSA. 1996. *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa no. 108 of 1996*. Pretoria; Government Printers.

- RSA. 2008. *National Qualifications Framework Act 76 of 2008*. Pretoria; Government Printers.
- Robson, C. & McCartan, K. 2016. *Real World Research*. (4th edition). Hoboken: Wiley.
- Rose, P., Downing, P., Asare, S. & Mitchell, R. 2019. *Mapping the landscape of education research by scholars based in sub-Saharan Africa: Insights from the African Education Research Database*. Synthesis Report. REAL Centre: University of Cambridge
- Ryan, G. 2018. Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. *Nurse Researcher*, 25(4), 41- 49.
- Saetermoe, C. L., Chavira, G.&Khachikian, C. S. 2017. Critical race theory as a bridge in science training: The California State University, Northridge BUILD PODER program. *BMC Proc*, 4(11), 21. DOI: 10.1186/s12919-017-0089-2.
- Sathorar, H. & Geduld, D. 2018. Towards decolonising teacher education: Reimagining the relationship between theory and praxis. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4), 1-12. DOI: 10.15700/saje.v38n4a1714.
- Sahlins, M. 2013. *What Kinship Is—And Is Not*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Saunders, M. N. K., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A. & Bristow, A. 2019. *Research Methods for Business Students*. Harlow: Pearson.
- Sayed, Y., Motala, S. & Hoffman, N. 2017. Decolonising initial teacher education in South African universities: More than an event. *Journal of Education*, 68, 59–92.
- Schendel, R. 2018. Understanding the relationship between institutional cultures and pedagogical change. In: Ashwin, P. & Case, J. M. (eds.). *Higher Education Pathways: South African Undergraduate Education And The Public Good*. Cape Town: African Minds, 136-148.
- Schleiermacher, F. D. E. 1998. *Hermeneutik Und Kritik = Hermeneutics and Criticism*. Translated by Bowie, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schulz, S. & Fane, J. 2015. A healthy dose of race? White students' and teachers' unintentional brushes with whiteness. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(11), 137-154.

- Schutte, F. 2019. Epistemic violence: A case for the decolonisation of South African business school curricula. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 33(2), 195- 211.
- Scott, C. L. & Ivala, E. N. 2019. *Transformation Of Higher Education Institutions In Post-Apartheid South Africa*. London: Routledge.
- Sebidi, K.&S. Morreira. 2017. Accessing powerful knowledge: A comparative study of two first year sociology courses in a South African university. *Critical Studies in Teaching and Learning*, 5(2), 33–50. DOI: 10.14426/cristal.v5i2.87.
- Shava, S. & Manyike, T. V. 2018. The decolonial role of African indigenous languages and indigenous knowledges in formal education process. *Indilinga African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems*, 17(1), 36–52. DOI: 10.4314/indilinga.v6i2.26422.
- Shawa L. B. 2019. In defence of education that embodies decolonisation. In: Manthalu, C. & Waghid, Y. (eds.). *Education for Decoloniality and Decolonisation in Africa*. Palgrave: Macmillan, 89- 109 .
- Sian, K. P. 2017. Being black in a white world: Understanding racism in British universities. *International Journal of Collective Identity Research*, 2, 1- 27.
- Sibanda, J. 2021. Academics' conceptions of higher education decolonisation. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 35(3),182- 199.
- Simukungwe, M. 2019. Universities as sites for advancing education for decolonisation. In: Manthalu, C. & Waghid, Y. (eds.). *Education for Decoloniality and Decolonisation in Africa*. Palgrave: Macmillan, 69- 87.
- Sleeter, C. E. & Grant, C. 1987. An analysis of multicultural education in the United States. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(4). DOI: 10.17763/haer.57.4.v810xr0v3224x316.
- Smith, J. A. Osborn, M. 2007. Pain as an assault on the self: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Psychology and Health*, 22(5), 517- 534.
- Smith, L. T., Tuck, E. & Yang, K. W. (eds.). 2019. *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*. New York: Routledge.
- Smith, G. H. & L. T. Smith. 2018. Doing indigenous work: Decolonizing and transforming the academy. In: McKinley, E. & Smith, L. T. *Handbook of Indigenous Education*. Singapore: Springer, pp.1–27.

- Smyth, R. 2004. Exploring the usefulness of a conceptual framework as a research tool: A researcher's reflections. *Issues in Educational Research*, 14(2), 167-180.
- Solorzano, D. G. 1998. Critical race theory, racial and gender microaggressions, and the experience of minority students in higher education. In C. Torres & T. Mitchell (eds.), *Emerging issues in sociology of education: Comparative Perspectives*, 211- 224. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Solórzano, D. G. & Yosso, T. 2000. Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students. *he Journal of Negro Education*, 69(1), 60–73.
- Solórzano, D. G. & Yosso, T. J. 2002. Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 23-43. DOI: 10.1177/107780040200800103.
- Solorzano, D. G. & Yosso, T. J. 2001. Critical race and LatCrit theory and method: Counter-storytelling. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 14(4), 471-495.
- Soudien, C. 2010. Grasping the nettle? South African higher education and its transformative imperatives. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 24(6), 881-896.
- Soudien, C. 2010. *Transformation in Higher Education: A briefing paper*. Unpublished report. Development Bank of Southern Africa, Johannesburg.
- South African History Archives (SAHA). 2021. What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics. *SAHA Virtual Exhibition – Hlanganani Basebenzi: Commemorating South Africa's Labour Movement*, AL2446_0272. Available at:
https://www.saha.org.za/workers/economic_research_committee_what_is_the_use_of_teaching_the_bantu_child_mathematics_when_he_cannot_use_it_in_practice_there_is_no_place_for_him_in_the_european_community_above_the_level_of_certain_forms_of_labour_verwoerd_1953.htm
- Spaull, N. 2013. South Africa's education crisis: The quality of education in South Africa 1994-2011. *Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise*, 21(1), 1-65.

- Spivak, G. C. 1988. Can the Subaltern Speak? In: Nelson, C. & Grossberg, L. (eds.). *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, pp. 271-313.
- Stellenbosch University (SU). 2017. The Transformation Plan of Stellenbosch University. Unpublished report. University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.
- Steger, M. B. & Roy, R. K. 2010. *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stein, S. & Andreotti, V. 2017. *Decolonization and Higher Education*. DOI: 10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_479-1.
- Sultana, F. 2019. Decolonising development education and the pursuit of social justice. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 12(3), 31- 46.
- Sumner, J. L. 2018. The Gender Balance Assessment Tool (GBAT): A web-based tool for estimating gender balance in syllabi and bibliographies. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 51(2), 396- 400. DOI: 10.1017/S1049096517002074.
- Tate IV, W. F. 1997. Critical Race Theory and education: History, theory, and implications. *Review of Research in Education*, 22 195-247.
- Taylor, F. W. 1911. *Principles of scientific management*. New York: Harpers Brothers.
- Taylor, P.C., & Medina, M.N.D. 2013. Educational research paradigms: From positivism to multiparadigmatic. *Journal for Meaning Centered Education*. 1, 1- 16. Retrieved from <http://www.meaningcentered.org/journal/volume-01/educational-research-paradigms-frompositivism-tomultiparadigmatic/>
- Tewari, D. D. & Ilesanmi, K. D. 2020. Teaching and learning interaction in South Africa's higher education: Some weak links. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 6(1), 1- 16.
- Thaman, K.H. 1993. Culture and the curriculum. *Comparative Education*, 29(3), 249-260.
- Theodoridis, C. 2014. *A Phenomenological Case Study: Strategy Development in Small and Medium Retail Enterprise in Greece During Recession*. London: SAGE.
- Trowler, V. 2019. Review on Jansen, J. D. Decolonisation in Universities: The Politics of Knowledge, Johannesburg: Wits University Press. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*, 7(2), 145-148. DOI: 10.24085/jsaa.v7i2.3832.

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. Honoring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331537977_An_English_Language_Teacher's_Pedagogical_Response_to_Canada's_Truth_and_Reconciliation_Commission_An_English_Language_Teacher's_Pedagogical_Response_to_Canada's_Truth (Accessed: 12 September 2020).
- Tyson, L. S., & Vega, V. W. 2019. Why we need to talk about lifelong learning intercultural universities. *London Review of Education*, 17(3), 347- 361.
- Rollock, N. 2019. *Staying in Power: The career experiences and strategies of UK Black female professors*. London: University and College Union.
- Tuck, E. & Yang, K. W. 2018. *Toward What Justice?* New York: Routledge.
- Tumubweinee, P. N. 2019. Physical space and transformation in higher education: The case of the University of the Free State. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.
- Tyler, R. 1949. *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Taylor, E. 1998. A primer on critical race theory: Who are the critical race theorists and what are they saying? *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 19(2) 122-124.
- UNESCO. 2017. *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives*. Paris: UNESCO. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247444> (Accessed: 23 May 2020).
- Universities Canada. 2015. *Universities Canada Principles on Indigenous Education*. Universities Canada. Available at: <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-on-indigenous-education/> (Accessed: 23 May 2020)
- University of Cape Town (UCT). 2016. Curriculum Change Framework of University of Cape Town. Unpublished report. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.
- University of Cape Town (UCT). 2019. Transforming curriculum and research. Unpublished report. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

- University of the Free State (UFS). 2017. Integrated Transformation Plan. Unpublished report. University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.
- University of Pretoria (UP). 2016. Curriculum Transformation at University of Pretoria. Unpublished report. University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2016a. UNISA Language policy. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2016b. Student funding policy. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2017. Annual report. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2018a. Integrated Annual Report. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2019a. Integrated Transformation Strategy. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2020a. Our Strategy: Vision and Mission. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2020b. UNISA 2030 Strategy. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- University of South Africa (UNISA). 2020c. University of South Africa Covid-19 guidelines: Implications of alert levels for researchers and postgraduate students. Unpublished report. University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Urquhart, C. 2015. Observation research techniques. *Journal of European Association for Health Information Libraries*, 11(3), 29-31.
- Vandeyar, S. 2016. The teacher as an agent of meaningful educational change. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*
- Vandeyar, S. 2019. Why Decolonising the South African university curriculum will fail. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 25(1), 1- 14. DOI: 10.1080/13562517.2019.1592149.
- Van Manen, M. 1990. *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Van Manen, M. 2017. Phenomenology in Its Original Sense. *Qualitative Health Research*, 27 (6), 810- 825.

- Vass, G. 2015. Putting critical race theory to work in Australian education research: 'we are with the garden hose here'. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 42 (3) 371- 394.
- Vilakazi, M. 2016. 'Tshwane University of Technology: Soshanguve campus protests cannot be reduced to # FeesMustFall'. In: Langa, M. (ed.). *#Hashtag: An analysis of the #FeesMustFall movement at South African universities*. Johannesburg: CSV, 49- 57.
- Vorster, J. & Quinn, L. 2017. The 'Decolonial Turn': What does it mean for academic staff development? *Education as Change*, 21(1), 31-49.
- Wachelke, J. 2014. Qualitative questionnaire for the identification of cognemes (Qualiquic): An exploratory technique to identify social representation contents and relations. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, 30(1), 105- 110.
- Waghid Y. & Manthalu C.H. 2019. Decoloniality as democratic change Within Higher Education. In: Manthalu C. & Waghid, Y. (eds.). *Education for Decoloniality and Decolonisation in Africa*. Palgrave: Macmillan, 25- 46.
- Waghid, Y. 2021. Why the decolonisation of higher education without critique is not possible? *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 35(2), 1-3.
- Walton, S. 2020. Why the critical race theory concept of 'white supremacy' should not be dismissed by Neo-Marxists: Lessons from contemporary black radicalism. *Power and Education*, 12(1), 78-94. DOI: 10.1177/1757743819871316.
- Wa Thiongo, N. 1981. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Nairobi: Heinemann.
- Webbstock, D. & Fisher, G. 2016. Overview. In: *South African Higher Education Reviewed: Two Decades of Democracy*. Eight Task Team Reports. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.
- Webbstock, D. 2017. Decolonising curriculum: Stimulating debate. *Briefly Speaking: Council on Higher Education*, 3(Nov.), 1-12. Available at: <https://www.che.ac.za/sites/default/files/publications/BS%203%20Curriculum%20Decol%20-%20Final.pdf> (Accessed: 2 February 2019).

- Weschenfelder, V. I. 2019. Teacher education in a racialised society: an interview with Gloria Ladson- Billings. *Revista Brasileira de Educacao*, 24(7), 1-12.
- Williams, P. 1991. *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Williams, A. C. 2018. Decolonising knowledge: Reflections on colonial anthropology and a humanities seminar at the University of the Free State. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 40(1), 82–103.
- Wilson, A. 2015. A guide to phenomenological research. *Nursing Standard*, 29(34) 38-43.
- Wolff, H. E. 2018. Translanguaging: There are 2144 African languages, using them in our universities will help, not hinder youth. *Quartz Africa*. Available at: <https://qz.com/africa/1201975/african-universities-should-use-african-languages-not-just-english-french-and-portuguese> (Accessed 13 November 2021).
- Wood, L. N., Sebar, B. & Vecchio, N. 2020. Application of rigour and credibility in qualitative document analysis: Lessons learnt from a case study. *The Qualitative Report*, 25(2), 456- 470.
- Yin, R.K. 2014. *Case study research: Design and methods*. (5th edition). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Yin, R. K. 2018. *Case Study Research and Application; Design and Methods*. (5th edition). London: SAGE.
- Yosso, T. J. 2002. Toward a critical race curriculum. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 35(2), 93-107.
- Zambylas, M. 2018. Revisiting Spivak's 'Can the Subaltern Speak' through the lens of affect theory: Can the subaltern be felt? *Qualitative Research Journal*, 18(1), 115- 127. pages.DOI: 10.1108/QRJ-D17-00048.

APPENDIX A: PROOF OF REGISTRATION



REG:

KUMARASWAMY S MOSS
38 HILL STREET NEWTON
SUNSHOWN
2191

STUDENT NUMBER : 55160044
ENQUIRIES TEL : 0800279411
FAX : (012)429-6158
EMAIL : enq@unisa.ac.za
2011-04-01

Dear Student

I hereby confirm that you have been registered for the current academic year as follows:

Approved Qualification:		PHD (EDUCATION)	(5901X)	PROVISIONAL EXAMINATION		
CODE	NAME	3 NAME OF STUDY UNIT	MQP CREDITS	LEVL	EXAM DATE	CENTRE(PLACE)
Study units registered without formal exams:						
TR2000		PHD - Education (Language Education)	**	0		

You are referred to the "MyRegistration" brochure regarding fees that are forfeited on cancellation of any study units.

To avoid cancellation of your registration or examination entry and forfeiting your minimum initial payment, you must submit the following to the Registrar (Academic) by return of mail:
200 Curriculum Vitae

- 4 Your attention is drawn to University rules and regulations (www.unisa.ac.za/registrar). Please note the new requirements for re-registration and the number of credits per year which state that students registered for the first time from 2011, must complete 36 MQP credits in the first year of study, and thereafter must complete 48 MQP credits per year. Students registered for the BBA, BBL and BDL degrees must visit the SA's eSOLLine for study material and other important information.
- Re-admission rules for Honours: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy academic activity must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the University during each year of study. If you fail to meet this requirement in the first year of study, you will be admitted to another year of study. After a second year of not demonstrating academic activity to the satisfaction of the University, you will not be re-admitted, except with the express approval of the Executive Dean of the College in which you are registered. Note too, that this study programme must be completed within three years. Non-compliance will result in your academic exclusion, and you will therefore not be allowed to re-register for a qualification at the same level on the National Qualifications Framework in the same College for a period of five years after such exclusion, after which you will have to re-apply for admission to any such qualification.
- Re-admission rules for PhD: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy, a candidate must complete a Master's qualification within three years. Under exceptional circumstances and on recommendation of the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (fourth) year to complete the qualification. For a Doctoral degree, a candidate must complete the study programme within six years. Under exceptional circumstances, and on recommendation by the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (seventh) year to complete the qualification.

BALANCE ON STUDY ACCOUNT: R.00

Yours faithfully,

Prof R. S. Motswa
Registrar

0100 0 00 0



APPENDIX B: PERMISSION AND CONSENT LETTER TO SENIOR ACADEMICS
INFORMATION SHEET FOR SENIOR ACADEMICS



Date: 15 April 2021

Title: *Perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning institution in South Africa.*

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

My name is Juliet Munyaradzi. I am doing research under the supervision of Professor T.V.Manyika, in the Department of Language, Arts and Culture towards a Ph.D in Education at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: *Perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning institution in South Africa.*

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study is expected to collect important information that could help policy makers with some insights into the agenda of decolonising university curricula so that they can map possible way forward. The study can also be of benefit to future researchers who may want to conduct studies on decolonisation and language of instruction in South Africa higher education or other contexts outside South Africa.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited because since the 2015/2016 students protests in South African universities, universities in the country developed new frameworks which promote decolonisation so it is relevant to conduct a study of this nature which involves academics who teach at the University of South Africa. By the time of approval of the policies, you were already working as a stakeholder in the implementation of the policy at your current institution; your input is considered relevant.

It is only for the purpose of this study that I have accessed your contact details. I will stick to the Protection of Personal Information Act of 2013 thus as per requirement of Section 15 of the Act, once the study is completed, I will dispose of your contact detail because it would have served the intended purpose. If you agree to participate in the study, you will be one of the twenty eight participants in the study, amongst which sixteen will be senior academics and twelve postgraduate students.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

|

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION AND CONSENT LETTER TO POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

LETTER OF CONSENT FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS



Date

Title: *Perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning institution in South Africa.*

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

My name is Juliet Munyaradzi. I am doing research under the supervision of Professor T.V. Manyike, a professor in the Department of Language, Arts and Culture towards a PhD in Education at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: *Perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning university in South Africa.*

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study is expected to collect important information that could help policy makers with some insights into the agenda of decolonising university curriculum so that they can map possible way forward. The study can also be of benefit to future researchers who may want to conduct studies on decolonisation in South Africa higher education or other contexts outside South Africa.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited because in 2019 a new framework which promotes decolonisation was approved at the institution so it is relevant to conduct a study of this nature at your institution. By the time of approval of the policy, you were already a student at this institution and as a stakeholder in the implementation of the policy; your input is considered relevant.

I obtained your contact details from the University of South Africa in the College in which you are registered after I got permission to conduct the study, and after it was realised that you fit into the categories of the attributes that I am looking for in the selection of my participants. It is only for the purpose of this study that I have accessed your contact details. I will stick to the Protection of Personal Information Act of 2013 thus as per requirement of Section 15 of the Act, once the study is completed, I will dispose of your contact detail because it would have served the intended purpose. If you agree to participate in the study, you will be one of the twenty five participants in the study, amongst which ten are senior academics and postgraduate students at the institution.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

In this study, you will respond to semi-structured individual telephonic interview. Semi-structured individual telephonic interview method is a safe way for both the researcher and

APPENDIX D: UNIVERSITY PERMISSION LETTER

RESEARCH PERMISSION SUB-COMMITTEE (RPSC) OF THE SENATE
RESEARCH, INNOVATION, POSTGRADUATE DEGREES AND
COMMERCIALISATION COMMITTEE (SRIPCC)

12 July 2021

Decision: Permission approval 12
July 2021 to 31 December 2021

Ref #: 2021_RPSC_047

Ms Juliet Munyaradzi

Student #: 55365864

Staff #:

Principal Investigator:

Ms Juliet Munyaradzi
Department of Language Education, Arts and Culture
College of Education
jumunyah@gmail.com; 0722668679

Supervisor: Prof Tintswalo Vivlan Manyike, manyiv@unisa.ac.za; 0828208871

PERCEPTIONS OF SENIOR ACADEMICS AND POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ON
DECOLONISATION OF UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM AT AN OPEN DISTANCE E-LEARNING
INSTITUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Your request for permission to involve UNISA employees, students and data regarding the above study has been received and was considered by the Research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC) of the UNISA Senate, Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Degrees and Commercialisation Committee (SRIPCC) on 17 June 2021.

It is my pleasure to inform you that permission has been granted for the study. You may include 20 senior academic Unisa employees who have been teaching postgraduate students prior to the 2015-2016 student protest until the present. You may select the academics purposively and request their permission to take part in online questionnaires and follow-up focus group discussions. You may also include fifteen postgraduate students purposively selected to request their permission to take part in telephonic interviews.

You may also access the following secondary data: UNISA recent language policy, Unisa Curriculum policy, language policy implementation plans, Unisa transformation Agenda, Unisa 2016-2030 version.

The Committee requested you to display social sensitivity to prevent harmful effects that might arise from the dissemination of the findings. Unisa supports the Statement on Ethical Research and Scholarly Publishing Practices Issued by ASSAf CHE, DHET, NRF and [USAf](#) (2019). Paragraph seven on this statement raises awareness to the responsibility of researchers and institutions to demonstrate social awareness by displaying sensitivity to the potential impact of research on society, marginal groups or individuals.

The personal information made available to the researcher(s)/gatekeeper(s) will only be used for the advancement of this research project as indicated and for the purpose as described in this permission letter. The researcher(s)/gatekeeper(s) must take all appropriate precautionary measures to protect the personal information given to him/her/them in good faith and it must not be passed on to third parties. The dissemination of research instruments through the use of electronic mail should strictly be through blind copying, so as to protect the participants' right of privacy. The researcher hereby indemnifies UNISA from any claim or action arising from or due to the researcher's breach of his/her information protection obligations.

You are requested to submit a report of the study to the Research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC@unisa.ac.za) within 3 months of completion of the study.

Note: The reference number 2021_RPSC_047 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants and the Research Permission Subcommittee.

We would like to wish you well in your research undertaking.

Kind regards,



Dr Retha Vraagle – Deputy Chairperson

Email: vraagr@unisa.ac.za, Tel: (012) 429-2478

Prof Lessing Labuschagne- Chairperson

Email: labus@unisa.ac.za, Tel: (012) 429-8388

APPENDIX E: PERMISSION LETTER FROM UNIVERSITY

Request for permission to conduct research at the University of South AFRICA

Title: Perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning institution in South Africa.

The Dean
College of Education
University of South Africa

Dear Professor

I, Juliet Munyaradzi, am doing research under supervision of T.V.Mazyike, a professor in the Department of Language Education, Arts and Culture towards a Ph.D in Education at the University of South Africa. We are requesting for permission to have twenty senior academics and fifteen postgraduate students at your university as our participants in a study entitled: Perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on the decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-Learning institution in South Africa.

The aim of the study is to explore how the senior academics, postgraduate students perceive the decolonisation of university curriculum at a distance e-learning institution. This institution has been selected because in 2019, it developed and implemented a new framework which promotes decolonisation of curriculum in all its colleges. This move was taken as a response to the ongoing decolonisation debate which was sparked in the country by the 2015/ 2016 students protest movements. Thus it is relevant to conduct the study at this institution.

The study will entail a case study in which data will be collected from document analysis, senior academics and postgraduate students at the university through online qualitative questionnaire with the senior academics and semi- structured individual telephonic interviews with the postgraduate students. The data will be recorded and analysed using and interpretative analysis through a critical race theory lens.

There will not be monetary benefits in this study but some of the participants may get the satisfaction of having contributed to an educational research of this nature. In terms of potential risks, no foreseeable risk is detected. However, there may be the possibility of some participants feeling discomfort in the process of gathering data. Because of such possibilities, issues of confidentiality will be observed and no one will ever be forced to talk about anything which makes them feel uncomfortable.

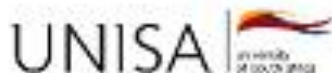
There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

Feedback procedure will entail, contacting the researcher through the contact details which will be provided to every participant. On request about feedback by any participant, contact details of the researcher and the research supervisor shall be provided in the consent form that each participant will fill in.

Yours sincerely



Juliet Munyaradzi
Researcher.



INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

1. Please tell me about:

a) Your age, the programme you are studying for and at what stage you are in your programme.

b) The department in which you are registered for your current studies at the institution.

2. What do you understand by decolonisation of university curriculum?

3. What would you say influenced the way you understand decolonisation?

4. What exactly needs to be decolonised in the university curriculum?

5. What kind of content do you prefer to see in a decolonised curriculum?

6. What strategies do you suggest to be used in decolonising the curriculum at your institution?

7. What is your opinion on how the students at your institution view decolonisation of the university curriculum?

8. What is your opinion on the impact of decolonisation on the choice of language of instruction at your university?



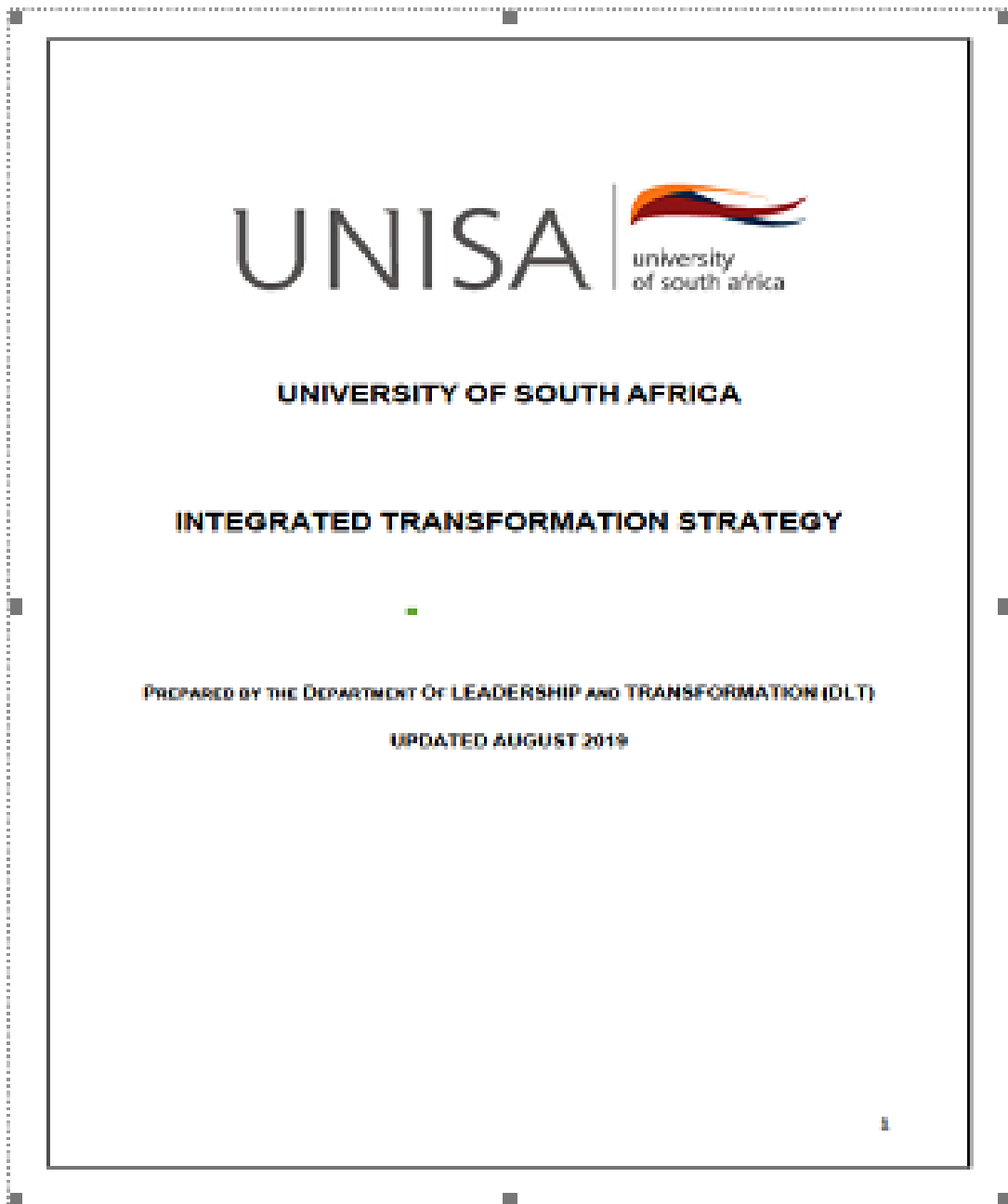
QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SENIOR ACADEMICS

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this qualitative questionnaire on my PhD research topic: **Perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students on decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-learning institution in South Africa.** Your statements in any write ups will remain anonymous and no-one will be able to attribute them to you (unless you wish to be acknowledged for some of your statements, in which case please let me know if this is the case). For example, you may wish your understanding of the major goals of decolonising the curriculum or perhaps your suggested strategies for decolonising it (which are some of my questions in this questionnaire) to be attributed to you, so that your voice will be present in the write up. But otherwise all your statements that you express here will remain anonymous and all statements will have only a pseudonym or a letter such as P1, P2 (for different participants) to identify you.

Kindly type your responses under each question. You are welcome to express your responses without space constraints, that is why there is unlimited space for you to type your responses.

1. Do you mind telling me (more or less) how old you are?
2. What is your title and in which College and Department do you work?
3. What is your work experience in higher education as well as in the current institution?
4. What courses or modules do you teach at the moment, for how long have you been teaching these courses or modules?
5. What do you understand by the term decolonisation of the university curriculum?
6. Explain what has influenced you to understand the concept of decolonisation of university curriculum the way you do.

APPENDIX H: UNISA INTEGRATED TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY



APPENDIX I: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS



APPENDIX I: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

1. Type of document

2. Date of document

3. Author(s) of document

4. Intended audience

5. Function of the document

6. Ways in which document is related to research questions

|

APPENDIX J: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2021/04/14

Ref: 2021/04/14/55366864/21/AM

Dear Mr J MUYARADZI

Name: Mr J MUYARADZI

Student No.: 55366864

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2021/04/14 to 2026/04/14

Researcher(s): Name: Mr J MUYARADZI
E-mail address: jumuyah@gmail.com
Telephone: +27 723668679

Supervisor(s): Name: PROF TV MANYIKE
E-mail address: Manyiv@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +37 134094004

Title of research:

Perceptions of Senior Academics and Postgraduate Students on the Decolonisation of university curriculum at a Distance e-learning Institution in South Africa.

Qualification: PhD Curriculum Studies

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2021/04/14 to 2026/04/14.

The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2021/04/14 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



University of South Africa
Pretoria Street, Muckleneuk, 2000, City of Tshwane
PO Box 191, UNISA 0201, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)21 959 3111 Facsimile: +27 (0)21 959 4100
www.unisa.ac.za

Table of Contents

1	Our Strategic Context	3
	Our Heritage	
	Our Environment	
	UNISA In the next decade	
	Critical Insights for the next decade	
2.	Our Vision, Mission and Values	7
3.	Unisa Business Model	10
4.	Unisa Capitals	12
5.	Performance Management Framework	13
6.	Unisa Strategy Map	14

The University's 2030 strategy spells out the vision, mission, values and strategic focus areas of the University. This strategy, among other things, aims at creating *optimal conditions* for teaching, learning, research and community engagement. A new strategic plan for the University, Vision 2030, was *adopted by* Council in 2015. UNISA 2030 strategy is a revision of UNISA 2015 – An Agenda for Transformation. *The UNISA Strategic Plan 2016–2030* *revises* the second phase in UNISA's strategic planning and direction after the mergers of the former University of South Africa, Technikon South Africa and the Vista University Distance Education Centre to form the new UNISA.

In March 2019, the University *commissioned a* review of the implementation of its UNISA 2030 Strategic Plan. The purpose of the review included considering *how operational* changes since 2016 might impact on the current setting and accomplishment of strategic targets.

The strategy workshop that was held in September 2019 *supported* management's proposal for a need to revise the 2016–2030 strategy.

The revisions of the strategy had to consider key priorities for the University, as well as the development of improvement plans for those areas that still need focussed attention for the University to deliver at an optimal level.

In October 2019, UNISA started the process of revising its strategy to enable the University to remain relevant in an ever-changing and competitive higher education landscape. The revised strategy is expected to accelerate transformation *and to* usher in a fully-fledged Open Distance e-Learning (ODEL) delivery mode, supported by a strong ICT and agile administrative environment. The *educational focus* will continue to be on providing an excellent student experience underpinned by a student-centric academic agenda and services.



Our Environment

Our Heritage

UNISA has been the single constant by being a genuine, dependable beacon of hope where, at times, there seemed to be no other in the provisioning of distance education in Africa. In 2020, UNISA provides access to higher education by distance mode to more than 400 000 students from 130 countries around the world – 25 000 of these hailing from South Africa's continental neighbours. UNISA continues to turn out more than 50 000 skilled and competent graduates annually. It accounts for producing close to a third of South Africa's chartered accountants, thereby making a huge contribution to alleviating the scarcity of skills in South Africa and abroad. It is a proud contributor to the education of more than half of South Africa's teachers in various levels of basic education and in the provision of further education. UNISA is proud of the many successful politicians, writers, artists, composers, singers, advertising gurus and business leaders it counts amongst its alumni – a cohort that includes Nobel Peace Prize winners.

In 2020, UNISA celebrated its one hundred and forty-seventh year as one of the world's mega distance providers of quality education. Over this period, the institution has given rise to many other universities in South Africa, as well as Open Distance Universities in the rest of Africa, and has undergone several metamorphoses: from initially being an examination centre to ultimately becoming an ODeL institution in its own right. It has made immense contributions to the development of both the country and the continent.

UNISA has, over time, carved for itself a niche as a provider of quality distance education. In the post-2020 context, UNISA will become an exemplar of online teaching and e-assessments and a critical disrupter in enabling wider access to Higher Education.

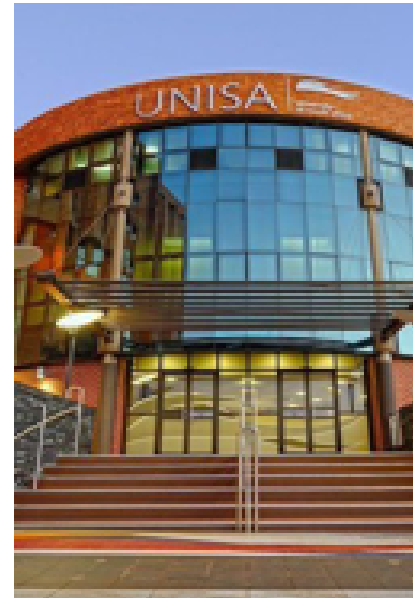




Our Environment

The revised strategy recognises and takes account of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that emanate from both the internal and external environment. As a key strength, UNISA prides itself in 2020 on its track record of 147 years providing quality distance education programmes, accredited and recognised, both formal and non-formal, to a diverse group of students. UNISA also offers a varied [qualification mix](#) to ensure professional advancement and the employability of its students. [Through its](#) strong established partnerships, UNISA delivers effective quality education through its highly skilled personnel, more than half of whom have doctoral qualifications. UNISA [continues to](#) be impactful in society through its community engagement projects partnerships with key critical stakeholders. Addressing its recognised and acknowledged challenges will be integral to its implementation of the 2030 strategy.

The identified opportunities also pave the way for UNISA to expand its [operations in](#) line with the four key strategic focus areas referenced next.



UNISA in the Next Decade

UNISA has a bright future that will be built on its proud heritage and on the significant role that the institution has played and will continue to play in the positive massification of South African tertiary education. In this way, it will directly contribute to addressing the imbalances and injustices of our country's past. It will achieve this by being a [corporate social](#) university with quality academic and professional staff – and UNISA 2030 is intended to provide its direction in the next decade.

UNISA has the unique advantage of catering for diverse populations, including people with disabilities, members of the working class, mid-career workers and, as of recently, underprepared school-leavers who have no experience of learning at distance institutions. The University's strategy revision process has taken into cognisance the changing policy environment, stringent reporting regime and regulatory, risk and compliance requirements. It also acknowledges the future broad impact of Covid-19 on our society and our operations.

This new context requires that there be a [prioritisation of](#) national resources. Thus, future university budgets will, amongst other things, have to deal with expanding the organisation's ITC capacity and taking care of health and safety issues. Our understanding of work is being redefined, changing in ways that nobody anticipated.



Critical insights for the next decade

The University has, [from its](#) benchmarking and environmental scans, gathered valuable insights on how to approach the next decade. By 2030, UNISA aims to have executed the revised Strategy 2030 in full and to have [made](#) significant strides towards achieving its Vision. The University now recognises:



Changing Learning Styles

Traditional teaching styles are no longer effective for Millennials and Generation Z – specifically Generation Z who were born into the age of technology. Researchers have [found that](#) these generations are not passive learners but prefer a learning environment that allows them to fully immerse themselves in the learning experience, allows for collaboration with other students, and allows for online learning. Contact universities have also begun their journey from traditional styles of teaching to more blended approaches.



Changing Labour Markets

Changing labour markets require [curricula to](#) become more flexible and [easier](#) to alter in order to address fast-moving changes in the workplace. Developing graduate attributes that will lead to [employability](#) is a critical mandate for the University while 40% of its students in 2020 are unemployed.



Massive Open Online Course

Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) has taken off significantly in the United States and Europe and has made its way to South Africa. Platforms such as Coursera, edX, Udacity and Udemy provide higher education courses and resources making use of online platforms that permit self-studying at a more affordable rate than traditional universities. These platforms allow for a truly online learning experience where students have access to recorded lectures, readings, interactive online assessments that provide immediate feedback, and online support communities where students are able to interact with other students, professors and teaching assistants. [Such platforms](#) have made it affordable for students to access courses from prestigious international universities and courses specifically designed by companies.



Shifting Demographics

The shifting UNISA demographics need to be closely monitored. They indicate that the University has evolved [from being](#) primarily an education provider for working, part-time students. Indeed, UNISA has evolved [into being](#) an institution that is now comprised of 30% of under-24-year-old and 40% unemployed students who might be studying on a full-time basis. The latter cohort brings with it new dynamics and requirements that impact on physical infrastructure provision and student support modalities, amongst other things. This calls for a greater understanding of our students.

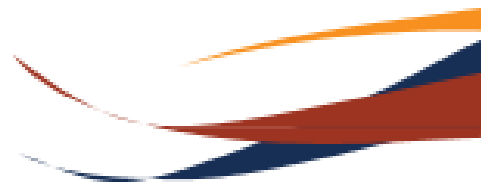
2. Our Vision, Mission and Values

The African university shaping futures in the service of humanity.

The spirit of UNISA's vision statement – Towards the African University in the service of humanity – is set out in the 2015 Strategic Plan. This remains a compelling signifier of the University's bold aspirations and unique positioning as UNISA approaches its 150th anniversary within the next five years. UNISA has become an iconic and productive model of an African University synonymous with Open Distance Learning in Africa and abroad. It has gained stature and repute as a national, continental and international treasure in respect of providing access to higher education, especially to those who cannot access contact institutions. There is an overwhelming recognition of the fact that, throughout much of its history, UNISA has been "shaping futures" and is thus truly an African University "shaping futures" in the service of humanity.

This vision remains a compelling identity marker as UNISA charts its future as a mega open distance e-Learning (ODeL) provider with a footprint across many countries.

The vision builds on a rich heritage and the privilege of being, since 1946, the first public university in the world to teach exclusively by means of Distance Education. UNISA's identification as "The African" university stems from its deep commitment to Africa-focused and Africa-centred knowledge creation and contributions in terms of our world view, identity and way of being. The University is always equally cognisant of the demand to be globally competitive through both its reach and its offerings. This vision defines everything that the University aspires to and, in so doing, describes its zeal to be of service to humanity.



We are a comprehensive student-centred Open Distance e-Learning (ODeL) Institution producing lifelong quality university education for all and knowledge dissemination that is continentally responsive and globally relevant.

The UNISA 2030 mission statement affirms the unique character of the institution, specifically in that it is the only dedicated comprehensive open distance learning higher education institution in South Africa. Quality scholarship, research and learning, culminating in the success and graduation of students who will make a difference in the service of humanity, is the hallmark so clearly foregrounded in the 2030 mission statement.

Given that UNISA accounts for more than a third of the student population in the South African higher education sector, its teaching and learning approach and delivery model requires the development of an organisation-wide ICT capability that is supported by a robust, stable, cutting-edge ICT infrastructure and platforms.



By being comprehensive, UNIRA opens access to both general academic and career-focused programmes. Students have options to choose from a wider variety of programmes with different entry requirements and improved articulation between the career-focused and general academic programmes. This enhances student mobility between different programmes. Being comprehensive also creates expanded opportunities for basic and applied research that is responsive to the social and economic needs of industry and civil society, on the African continent and throughout the world. The University continues to provide a wide range of qualifications, from certificate programmes to doctoral qualifications.

Student-centred means that even though our students may be geographically distant from the University, their lived experience will be one of the University being close to them. The University will create opportunities for individuals to traverse from learning to work and from work to learning throughout their lives through carefully structured formal and non-formal programmes designed to respond to students' needs and to the market.

e-learning means digitally delivered continuous learning on end-user devices, using Artificial Intelligence to improve learning experiences through interactions with chatbots and intelligent assistants. It also includes using Big Data — advanced analytics and information from learning management systems — as well as features (i.e. student assessments and performance tracking) intended to provide meaningful real time data about student behaviour for the customisation and personalisation of learning based on students' unique needs. e-Learning may also include gamification and micro-learning — bite-sized support resources including easy-to-digest microlearning content such as short games, videos, quizzes or interactive infographics — as part of the quality learning experience.



UNISA has made a special commitment to quality education (SDG 4) and societal transformation (NDP objective 1 and 7; SDG 1, 2, 8, 10,17) and is committed to mainstreaming and affirming African knowledge and scholarship in a bid to address the African historical and developmental condition.

Given the progress made [during UNISA 2015: Towards a High-Performance University](#), UNISA can unequivocally commit to a concerted and dedicated trajectory in order to actualise its aspiration of being The African University. UNISA's promise to its stakeholders is to provide quality education which will, in turn, assist in reducing inequality and will focus on key capabilities of both people and the country. These capabilities include [the development](#) of critical skills, infrastructure, social security, strong institutions and meaningful partnerships – both within the country and with key international partners aligned to the UN's sustainable development goals operating within a values driven culture.

As part of its strategic relevance in the continent and globally, UNISA differentiates itself by conscientiously and deliberately aligning its strategy, firstly with the National Development Plan 2030 and then with the African Union's 2063 agenda, with special emphasis on uniting Africans and South Africans of all races and classes around a common programme to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality. This commitment also works in tandem with the aspirations of high standards of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens.

These ideals will be achieved by creating well-educated citizens and the [expedient](#) of a skills revolution underpinned by technology and innovation.

In its mission, UNISA purports to drive all the sustainable development goals through its teaching, research and community [engagement](#) and partnerships, these being evident in the biennial report submitted to the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). Moreover, UNISA is the first university in South Africa to be a signatory to the UNGC.

Our Values

~~These stem~~ from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and include the inalienable right to human dignity and the recognition and respect of diversity for the attainment of equality. They also affirm our historical values of social justice and fairness as a constitutive element of dignity, emphasising freedom of conscience, belief, thought, opinion and expression, academic freedom and freedom of scientific research, freedom of artistic creativity, freedom to receive or impart information or ideas, and the inherent right to have dignity respected and protected. ~~These espousing standards~~ are inherent in all the rules and policies of UNISA. In aspiring to achieve its vision and be true to the commitments of its mission statement, UNISA unambiguously ~~and unequivocally~~ subscribes to the following values:

Ethical and ~~collective responsibility~~

Ethics reflect the intrinsic and extrinsic values, principles, norms and standards to which UNISA is committed and are underpinned by respect, integrity, ~~accountability and~~ excellence. Our ethics guide all ~~institutional conduct~~ actions, decisions and stakeholder relations, supporting equity and fairness. Against this backdrop, our decision-making will be ~~participatory in~~ the interests of the effective and efficient functioning of the university – all employees are equally responsible for decisions taken and implementation is underpinned by commitment and loyalty to and solidarity with UNISA.

Integrity

Integrity refers to ~~conduct guided~~ by honesty, equity, respect, transparency and responsibility in all that we do. Integrity must be evident at an individual level and it should be infused in the character of the institution through the behaviours of the individuals who ~~constitute and~~ engage with the university.

Innovation and excellence

At UNISA, innovation and excellence characterise the actions, attitudes and culture required to create new ideas, processes, systems, structures, or artefacts which, when implemented, lead to a sustainable and high-performing institution. They are the underlying principles that we, as change agents, use to make a difference in the way we work with the ~~limited resources~~ available to achieve our specific goals despite contextual and policy constraints. Innovation requires everyone to adopt a problem-solving approach that fosters intellectual ingenuity and novel solutions rather than simply problem identification.

Responsive student-centredness

Responsive student-centredness ~~reflects~~ our commitment to recognising, cultivating and promoting the interests and views of students – especially their lived experiences and prior learning – in order to achieve academic access and success in an Open Distance e-Learning context.

Dignity in diversity

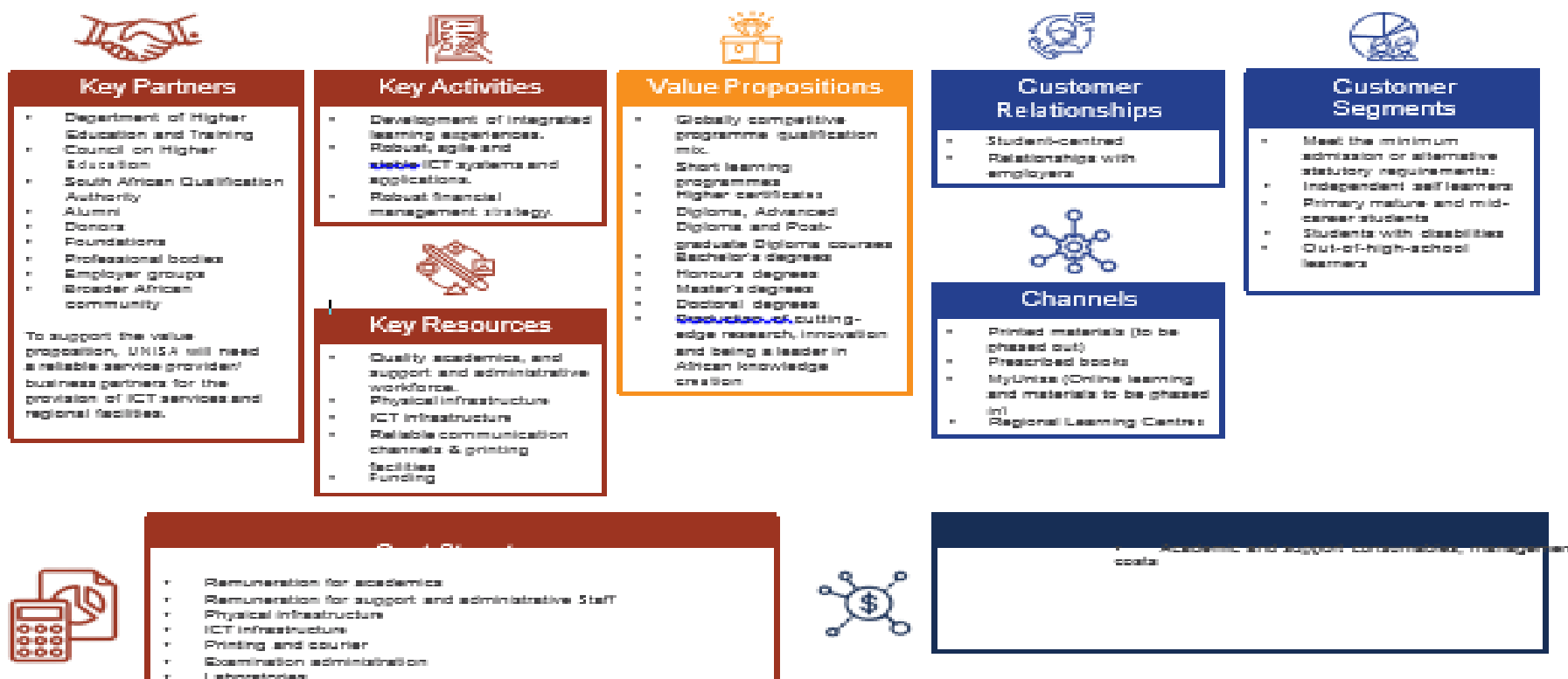
At UNISA, we will strive to promote humanness, anti-racism and self-worth in the context of cultural and intellectual differences for the attainment of equality, and will not tolerate unfair discrimination based on race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, birth, HIV status or any other arbitrary grounds. This value speaks to UNISA's soul and identity.

Accountability

In order to ~~create a~~ high-performance culture and work ethic, we accept individual accountability for our decisions, our actions and mistakes as individuals – irrespective of whether we are leaders, employees, or students. We are clear about our ~~expectations from~~ each other and we ensure that our expectations are credible and reasonable. We ~~hold one~~ another accountable for what we have agreed upon within a UNISA consequence management regime.

3. UNISA Business Model

The revised strategy will be supported by a sound and comprehensive business model. The business model identifies our capitals, activities, and outcomes, to ensure "How will UNISA win" in its chosen focus areas and its environment. The business model speaks to our value proposition, customer segmentation, key partners, stakeholder relationships, key processes, key resources, cost structure, revenue streams and delivery model. This model will ensure a successful operationalisation of the strategy and assist in identifying key sources of revenue, our intended customer base, resources, processes, products and details of financing our envisaged activities.



|

Government subsidy: Teaching input, teaching output, research output, ~~institutional-factor~~, and earmarked funding.

Tuition and other fee income.

Interest and dividends.

Other: research income, renting out of facilities, parking, recycling, catering services, ~~publications and~~ print services.

4. UNISA Capitals

Human Capital

- Established stakeholder partnerships in delivery
- A well-qualified and diverse staff cohort
- Continuous staff recruitment, retention, development and deployment

Intellectual Capital

- Appropriate, flexible and open systems, policies and procedures
- Branding and marketing of programmes
- Research outputs
- Patents granted

Reputational Capital

- Pioneer ODeL model for higher education in a developing economy
- Longest standing track record for public distance education [worldwide](#) -> 146 years
- Largest distance education [institution in Africa](#) – with close to 350 000 students
- Recognised global competitiveness and excellence

Financial Capital

Revenue streams

- Tuition fees
- [Investment Income](#)

Third party funding

- Private donations
- Grants
- Ring-fenced donations for projects
- Other third-stream income sources (short learning programmes, Unisa Business Enterprise)

Social & Relationship Capital

- Established stakeholder partnerships
- Growing enrolled base and graduates, alumni
- Offering of bridging courses to enable advancing higher education
- Registered community engagement programmes
- Renewable and non-renewable [environmental resources](#) and processes; preserving biodiversity and eco-system health within Unisa's sphere of influence/ control

Access Capital

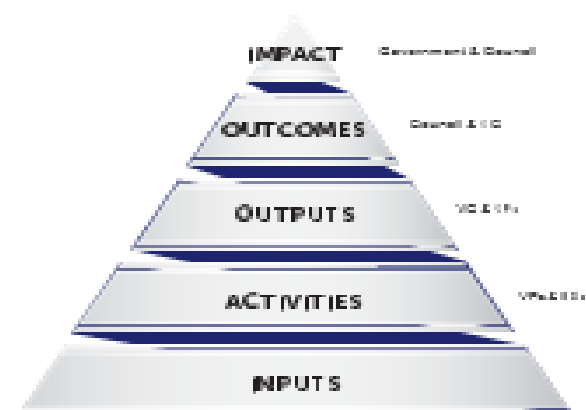
- ODeL model for superior accessibility to affordable quality higher education irrespective of geographical location, study budget; study time availability (while working); or qualification scores for conventional tertiary education
- Regional learning & research support resources – Printing study material on demand
- Robust and modern ICT systems on all campuses
- Modern, appropriate multipurpose facilities and infrastructure at all campuses e.g. smart buildings for 24/7 access
- Library is accessible to students through myUnisa and the Library App (24/7) [and](#) has, over the years, increased its subscription to the following eResources to ensure online 24/7 library access:
 - 200 000 e-Books (this includes some textbooks that are available on e-print)
 - Most textbooks in hard-print from the publishers
 - 441 individual database titles
 - 481 371 e-journal titles
 - 11 931 linked E-reserves

5. Performance Management Framework

UNISA needs to steer clear of trying to be “everything to everybody”. UNISA, as a distance learning institution which traditionally catered for working adults, is now confronted with a growing youthful population in South Africa and on the continent. The current strategy must take cognisance of these developments by defining who our students are. This requires us to embrace that a UNISA student should be an independent self-directed learner willing to study through distance with appropriate academic support to ensure success within the shortest possible time. This understanding calls for better refinement of our processes and our thinking and orientation of staff and student in respect to the design of our learning materials, our teaching and learning strategies, our delivery tools and our support of our students, all of which acknowledge access to learning and materials in a internet mediated manner and in recognition of technological advancements of the 4th and 5th industrial revolution capabilities at our disposal. In pursuit of this quest to become a fully-fledged ODeL institution by 2030, the University needs to shed its paper-driven studying and working environment into a paperless and online environment by 2025.

The University needs to revise its performance management model for the next decade. This is in recognition of the daunting task of trying to plan for many years into the future in a volatile, uncertain, ambiguous and rapidly changing environment – including the Covid-19 and Post-Covid-19 aspects of that environment.

UNISA has divided its planning cycles for the period 2016 –2030 into three phases: 2016–2020, 2021–2025 and 2026–2030. Strategic objectives and targets are defined according to an outcomes-based approach and the University will thus adopt a new tiered approach as represented in the following graphic:



At the highest level, UNISA's contributions will have an impact in relation to the country's national priorities. The University contributes to these ideals in tandem with other institutions and, at this level, its contributions are not measured.

A level below are Outcomes, which are the high-level results of UNISA's efforts. These are the targets that the Vice Chancellor and Principal is responsible for and reports on to Council.

Outputs are the results of a Portfolio's efforts to contribute to the Outcomes at Council level. These are not necessarily at a strategic level, but do need to be monitored at Portfolio level.

Activities at the operational/execution level are overseen by Departmental Heads, Executive Directors and so on and they directly contribute towards the outputs measured at Output level.

At Inputs levels, resources required are allocated to facilitate and make possible the required Activities, considering context and people.



6. UNISA Strategy Map



Vision	The African university shaping futures in the service of humanity			
Mission	We are a comprehensive, student-centred Open Distance e-Learning (ODeL) Institution, producing life-long quality university education for all and knowledge dissemination that is continentally responsive and globally relevant			
How do we look to our stakeholders?	Stakeholder Perspective (Reputational Capital, Access Capital and Social & Relationship Capital)			
	Improve first-year student retention	Enhance student success rate	Grow post-graduate component	Improve Student Satisfaction Index
	Offer accredited and registered quality programmes	Programmes that manifest indigenous knowledge and/or are available in select indigenous languages	Comprehensive online offerings	Facilitate access to digital devices and networks
	Improve collaborations in the area of community engagement	Improve research output	Improve Research Citation Index	Improve Research Citation Index
What do we do to have financial integrity & sustainability?	Financial Perspective (Financial Capital)			
	Financial sustainability	Financial regulatory compliance	Financial integrity	
What can we do to be more efficient with our resources?	Internal Efficiency Perspective (Crosscuts all six Capitals)			
	Adherence to principles of good governance	Ensure an appropriate size and shape for a comprehensive university	Smart campus implementation. Appropriate ICT business solutions, including an LMS with learning analytics capabilities	Alignment amongst governance structures to enhance transformation along BBBEE lines
How do we improve our human and intellectual resources?	Learning And Growth Perspective (Human Capital and Intellectual Capital)			
	Being a preferred higher education employer	Staff with appropriate aptitude, skills and temperament to operate in a 4th IR, technology-driven environment	Advance African scholarship through global collaborations	
Values	Ethical and collective responsibility, Integrity, Innovation and excellence, Responsive student-centeredness, Dignity in diversity, Accountability			

Approved – Council – 22.09.2008
 Revision – approved – Council – 19.11.2010
 Revision – approved – Council – 28.04.2018

-1-

© 2018 UNISA
 All rights reserved

UNISA LANGUAGE POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, provides the backdrop to this policy and lists the official languages of South Africa to be Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa and IsiZulu. Section 6 of the Constitution endorses the notion of functional multilingualism. Section 6(2) provides that the state, and by extension public institutions, must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of indigenous languages. The language clauses of the Constitution are furthermore supported by the Bill of Rights, which recognizes language as a basic human right. In view of the fact that the Constitution requires all languages to enjoy parity of esteem and be treated equitably, UNISA should take cognizance of the provisions of the Use of Official Languages Act 12 of 2012 and align its Language Policy and practices with this Act.

Mother-tongue based multilingual education (MLE) to support all South African students studying at UNISA is an ideal that must be the ultimate goal, even if the time span to achieve that goal may only be for future generations. First practicable steps should, however, be taken now to start on this road. Mother-tongue based MLE is not simply an ideological goal, but is supported by research in educational linguistics, all over the world, as well as in African multilingual settings. Students learning in their own language are generally more successful in their studies than students studying in an additional language. UNISA's movement towards an ODeL model creates a window of opportunity for the cost-effective use of indigenous languages in education through the use of technology. MLE should put the student at the center of this initiative, and should thus focus on student support and success. Students, in turn, should be actively encouraged to participate in the development and use of all the official languages of South Africa in higher education.

2. AIM

This policy informs the use of language in all aspects of communication of the University, i.e. teaching and learning, research, public, internal and external communication.

3. DEFINITIONS

African languages refer to Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa and IsiZulu;

Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) is contrasted with Basic Interpersonal Language Skills (BICS) and is generally defined as "... those aspects of language proficiency which are closely related to the development of literacy skills..." (Cummins, J. 1980: 1772) and, the development of the higher-level cognitive and academic abilities that are crucial to academic success;

	Digital Learning Object (DLO)	refers to a short, focused learning intervention which can be in digital video, audio or text format and which is intended to support students in their learning;
	Functional multilingualism	means that the choice of a particular language in a particular situation is determined by the context in which it is used, i.e. purpose, function, the audience and the message for which it is used. The purpose and context of the communication, the availability of resources and the target audience determine the choice of languages;
	Glossary (multilingual glossary)	refers to a text which identifies all the relevant terms in a module or discipline, with translations of these terms, as well as definitions appropriate definitions for learning;
	Languages of Learning and Teaching (LOLT)	refer to the languages that are used as media of instruction in learning environments;
	Language of record	refers to the language in which documents destined for record keeping will be recorded;
	Multilingual education	refers to an education which emphasises the use of learners' primary languages in formal education while learning a second language;
	Official languages	are the languages referred to in section 6 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
	Own language	within the context of this Policy refers to the official South African language of choice of a student.
4.	PRINCIPLES	
	4.1 The University	

- 4.1.1 acknowledges that there are eleven official languages in South Africa and ensures that, together with South African Sign Language, they enjoy parity of esteem and equitable treatment.
- 4.1.2 respects the founding values of human dignity, the achievement of equality, the advancement of human rights and freedom, non-racism and non-sexism as proclaimed in the Constitution.
- 4.1.3 recognises the constitutional provision pertaining to the right to receive education in the official language(s) of choice, taking into consideration equity, practicability, and the need to redress the results of past racial discriminatory laws and practices.
- 4.1.4 recognises the educational value and benefits of teaching and learning in the student's own language.
- 4.1.5 realises that language is not only about communication, but also about identity and respect.

- 4.1.6 realises that as a national university, Unisa endeavors to support all the official languages of South Africa.
- 4.1.7 recognises that its graduates should have a high level of proficiency in English to be competitive both nationally and internationally.
- 4.1.8 recognises that African languages (as defined in this policy), both as media of communication and as languages of learning and teaching (LOLT), have been historically disadvantaged. The University systematically makes resources available for the development of the nine African languages for the benefit of the University and the country.
- 4.1.9 recognises that where English and Afrikaans already have the capacity to operate as higher education-level languages, the University pro-actively supports African languages with a view to them becoming languages of learning and teaching at higher education level.
- 4.1.10 acknowledges and actively promotes the use of all the official languages in learner support and to scaffold learning, particularly harnessing the affordances of digital technologies.
- 4.1.11 creates a dedicated language unit to oversee the implementation of the policy, and acknowledges that all academic departments have an important role to play in the achievement of multilingual education and the development of the African languages.
- 4.1.12 accepts that decisions by Council on recommendation of Senate regarding languages of learning and teaching are preceded by and based on a formal investigation into the tuition needs, attitudes and preferences of students, and
- 4.1.13 undertakes to support the Language Policy and its implementation in terms of finance, technology and human resources.

4.2 Language(s) of learning and teaching (LOLT)

- 4.2.1 The LoLT in all undergraduate courses will be English, with scaffolding in other official languages as outlined in 4.4.
- 4.2.2 All undergraduate language courses will be offered in the language in question. Only in introductory foreign language instruction may English be used as initial scaffolding.
- 4.2.3 Where there is capacity, a selected number of modules and programmes will progressively be offered in more than one official South African language in order to support relevant national policies.
- 4.2.4 The University sets in place an infrastructure for all students to receive the necessary assistance in improving their cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in English, as well as in their own languages.

4.3 Language(s) of research and postgraduate teaching and supervision

- 4.3.1 The LoLT in all postgraduate courses will be English.
- 4.3.2 All postgraduate languages courses will be offered in the language in question.

4.3.3 Postgraduate research students are allowed to write their proposals, theses or dissertations in

- a) the language of the subject in which the proposal, thesis or dissertation is offered, or
- b) any of South Africa's official languages, or
- c) any other language as approved by the relevant College Higher Degrees Committee

provided that there is sufficient supervisory and examination capacity available for the estimated duration of the study. The student's choice of language has to be negotiated and agreed formally at the start of the study. Supervision in all official languages will be encouraged.

4.3.4 Every completed thesis or dissertation must have electronic abstracts available in the Institutional Repository in at least three official South African languages. The University will make resources available for the translation of abstracts after the examination has been completed.

4.4 Student support

4.4.1 All formal study material, formative and summative assessment, as well as other formal tuition activities will be in English only, whereas learner support activities may be in the language of the student.

4.4.2 Ubusa actively strives to support its students in their own languages, by phasing in:

- a) compulsory multilingual glossaries in all eleven official languages;
- b) translation support for basic study material in all eleven official languages;
- c) learning objects in various languages as scaffolding and support;
- d) tutorial support in all the official South African languages.

4.4.3 The University invests resources in improving the language proficiency, particularly the English skills, of all its students to enable students to access the library and other sources of information and enhance academic literacy in their fields of study. The University makes study material linguistically accessible through its instructional design and by devising strategies aimed at building language skills and academic literacy development into the study material.

4.4.4 The University provides special tuition aids required by students with sensory disabilities on request and where feasible, e.g. interpreters for South African Sign Language, Braille, tapes and other functional audio and video teaching means.

4.4.5 The University ensures that students with disabilities have access to their study material in order to enhance their formative and summative assessment through the use of Braille, tapes and other functional audio and video teaching means where these are needed.

4.5 Languages of public communication

4.5.1 Oral communication

- a) In oral communication with the public, employees should make every attempt to accommodate the language preference of the interlocutor.
- b) Employees refer telephone enquiries to other employees who are able to answer in the language chosen by the caller, where feasible.
- c) At all important service points (general information desks, student supervisory services, registration desks and the library) the University makes the means available to assist and advise students and employees in the language of their choice, including South African Sign Language to enhance a student-friendly ethos.

4.5.2 Written communication

- a) In its languages of public communication, in an effort to create an enabling environment, the University endeavors to use the languages of the region concerned.
- b) Addressees answer correspondence in the language in which it is addressed to the University.
- c) Official brochures and reports are written in accessible, reader-friendly language to accommodate the target audience and the language community for which a given document is intended.
- d) University publications consider their target readers and adhere to the institution's language policy. The use of various languages in these publications will be a visible sign of the University's commitment to multilingualism. Summaries are provided in other relevant languages.
- e) The University strives towards attaining the capacity to use all official languages without neglecting minority South African languages or South African Sign Language.
- f) In terms of the student communication and marketing strategy, all brochures may be produced in all eleven official languages of South Africa in digital format, where feasible.

4.5.3 Signage and branding

The University endeavors to do signage and branding in the languages of the region concerned.

4.5.4 Advertising

Advertising should be in the language of the target audience concerned. Where possible all eleven official languages should be used in at least one of the media channels used that is radio, television or newspapers.

- a) All official meetings and proceedings are conducted in English.
- b) Oral communication takes place in languages understood by the parties concerned.

4.6.2 Written communication

- a) The language of record is English.
- b) Documents of general interest to employees that change infrequently, for example the Institutional Statute of the University, conditions of employment and rules, are available in as many official languages as possible.
- c) Documentation relating to meetings will be in English.
- d) Official written communication will be gender-neutral or gender-inclusive.

4.7 Communications with people of restricted sight or hearing

The University provides special communication aids required by students with sensory disabilities on request, e.g. interpreters for South African Sign Language, Braille, tapes and other functional means to promote communication.

4.8 Employee development and capacity building

4.8.1 The University provides facilities through the relevant department(s) or otherwise to advocate and encourage employees to learn an African language and South African Sign Language, and to increase their competence in any medium of instruction. These courses will be predominantly conversational in character, content and form to enable employees to communicate effectively.

4.8.2 Effective but affordable incentives that would encourage employees to use these facilities will be investigated on an ongoing basis.

4.9 Labour relations

4.9.1 All participants at employee disciplinary hearings and student hearings have the right to use any of the official South African languages and South African Sign Language.

4.9.2 A participant or employee at a disciplinary hearing must notify the University seven days prior to the commencement of the hearing that he/she will use a language other than English to enable the University to provide translation.

4.9.3 Where multilingual discussion has taken place, the University provides summaries of the proceedings in at least English for record purposes.

Social events, just as any academic gathering within the University, are intended to further the educational mission of the University. The University respects the rights of its community members to participate in the academic and social events of the University in the language of their choice.

COMPLAINTS

The University will institute a complaints process through which complaints about language use and the implementation of this policy may be lodged. The complaints process will be objective and independent from the unit(s) where implementation of this policy takes place.

IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 The implementation of the policy will be the responsibility of a special language unit to be established in the University, with oversight by the Senate Language Committee (SLC) and ultimately the Senate of the University.
- 6.2 The policy will be made visible by its implementation, but also by its visible placement on the web, with summaries in offices of the University. The policy and its summary will be available in all eleven official languages of South Africa.
- 6.3 The implementation of this policy will take place in a phased-in approach, but with due regard to the urgency of making positive strides in the development of African Languages as languages of higher learning. It is acknowledged that there has been a gap between aspirational language policies and the implementation thereof, and the intent is to redress this situation.
- 6.4 Annual evaluation and reporting to the October Senate meeting on the implementation of the policy will take place, with a specific target date for re-evaluation in 2020.

OPEN DISTANCE eLEARNING POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The 2030 Strategic Plan of the University of South Africa (UNISA) dedicates itself to being the African university shaping futures in service of humanity. The Plan commits UNISA to an ongoing programme of curriculum transformation and pedagogical innovation.
- 1.2 UNISA espouses the values of the Constitution of South Africa, including the inalienable right to human dignity, and the recognition and respect of diversity for the attainment of equality. Additionally, UNISA commits itself to advancing social justice and fairness as a constitutive element of dignity, emphasising freedom of conscience, belief, thought, opinion and expression, academic freedom and freedom of scientific research, freedom of artistic creativity, freedom to receive or impart information or ideas, and the inherent right to have dignity respected and protected.
- 1.3 UNISA is South Africa's dedicated distance education university. UNISA is also mandated to be a comprehensive university offering programmes from NQF level 5 to 10, including non-formal programmes.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this ODeL Policy is

- 2.1 To position UNISA as a leading provider of higher education opportunities through open distance e-learning (ODeL) nationally, on the African continent and internationally.
- 2.2 To provide guidelines on ODeL processes, practices and systems.
- 2.3 To provide a shared understanding of ODeL and direct its implementation within a blended model of learning and teaching.

national and international imperatives and developments with relevance to quality ODeL provision.

f

3. DEFINITIONS	
Blended learning	Is the provision of learning opportunities using a combination of multiple teaching and learning strategies, pedagogies, educational technologies and student support where e-learning may form a significant proportion of the learning opportunities;
Distance education	Is a set of methods or processes for teaching a diverse range of students ¹ located at different places and physically separated from the learning institution, their tutors/teachers as well as other students;
Learning	Is an active process of construction of knowledge, attitudes and values as well as developing skills using a variety of resources including people, printed material, electronic media, experiential and work-integrated learning, practical training, reflection, research, etc. Learning is also associated with personal change and empowerment as an aspiration to improve oneself in order to help others;
e-learning	Is learning mediated through a wide range of current and emerging digital technologies and resources;
Open distance learning ²	Is a multi-dimensional concept aimed at bridging the time, geographical, economic, social, educational and communication distance between student and institution, student and academics, student and courseware and student and peers. Open distance e-learning focuses on removing barriers to access learning, flexibility of learning provision, student-centredness, supporting students and constructing learning programmes with the expectation that students can succeed;
Open learning	Is an approach which combines the principles of student-centredness, lifelong learning, flexibility of learning provision, the removal of barriers to access learning, the recognition for credit of prior learning experience, the provision of learner support, the construction of learning programmes in the expectation that students can succeed, acknowledging that students bring their own knowledges and experiences to learning and knowledge production;
Quality assurance and enhancement	Is the maintenance of rigorous quality assurance in the entire student experience from first contact to graduation, ensuring that the concept of quality is always being enhanced and on a trajectory to excellence and innovation;
Responsible open admission	promotes equity of access and the provision of appropriate student support interventions aimed at bridging the gaps in

¹ Note: While the *International Literature* on ODL favours the use of the term 'learner', feedback from UNISA learners indicated that they prefer to be known as 'students'

² UNISA's definition of ODL. *UNISA proposes* to combine the characteristics of distance education (a method of education provision) and the approach of 'open learning' into open distance e-learning

	It aims at identifying potential and appropriate support for students and constitutes competency evaluation and recognises students' educational background;
Student centeredness	requires that students are seen as the main foci of the educational process and they are supported to take progressive responsibility for their learning and research. The pedagogy employed should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable successful learning through rich environments for active learning, • establish links between students' current meanings and contexts and knowledges and new knowledge to be constructed, and • encourage independent and critical thinking;
Student support	is a generic term that is applied to a range of services offered by UNISA to assist students to meet their learning objectives and to gain the knowledge and skills to be successful in their studies;
Tutoring	encompasses a broad range of teaching, coaching, mentoring and monitoring activities that guide students interactively through their courses, mediating the packaged learning materials and facilitating the learning process.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 UNISA is a comprehensive open distance e-learning institution that will:
- 4.1.1 provide both undergraduate and postgraduate² qualifications in ODeL in accordance with national policies and benchmarked with international best practice.
 - 4.1.2 offer the full range of qualifications on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) in its Programme Qualifications Mix (PQM) and provide articulation pathways to allow maximum portability and progression between qualifications as befits a comprehensive university.
 - 4.1.3 promote lifelong learning by offering a variety of formal and non-formal learning programmes.
 - 4.1.4 provide quality education in an affordable and cost-effective way.
 - 4.1.5 not all learning programmes will be offered across borders.
- 4.2 Teaching and learning at UNISA:
- 4.2.1 is an integral part of each learning programme and is governed by the Teaching and Learning Policy.
 - 4.2.2 will be determined by the nature of the discipline and the level of the programme, the profile of the students and students' access to resources.
- 4.3 The curriculum of each learning programme will:

² Masters and Doctoral programmes are not funded as distance education at UNISA.

UNISA, national educational imperatives, and societal and employment needs,

4.3.2 **be** based on principles outlined in the Curriculum Policy.

4.4 Quality assurance and enhancement

4.4.1 All aspects of the provision of learning programmes will undergo regular monitoring and evaluation based on internationally recognized ways of quality assurance and enhancement in both higher education and in distance education.

4.4.2 Student feedback, student success and improvement of the student learning experience will be central in the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework.

4.5 Admission to learning programmes

4.5.1 UNISA will provide quality learning programmes in accordance to its carrying capacity that is outlined in the Enrollment Plan Procedural Manual.

4.5.2 UNISA will adhere to responsible open admission policy⁶.

4.6 Learning material

4.6.1 will be systematically designed as outlined in the Tuition Policy, the Curriculum Policy and the Framework for a Team Approach to Curriculum and Learning Development.

4.6.2 **will** be provided to students in digital format⁷. Printed learning material may be available at an additional cost to the student.

4.7 Student support

4.7.1 **takes** into consideration the diverse needs of students as well as the level of study.

4.7.2 Is a critical factor for teaching, learning and research in open distance e-learning.

4.7.3 **is** integrated into each learning programme and implemented by various stakeholders as outlined in the Student Support Framework.

4.8 Assessment

Assessment is central to student learning and fundamentally influences the way students structure their learning and plan their activities. Assessment at UNISA is governed by the Assessment Policy.

4.9 Appropriate management, administration and ICT systems

UNISA will:

4.9.1 **rely** on well-defined processes, procedures and robust organizational systems supported by ICT.

⁶ UNISA Admission Policy

⁷ Indigent students will be provided with a device by the university as well as access to the Internet.

4.9.2 review and develop its governance, management and technology infrastructure on an ongoing basis in order to give effect to its institutional vision and ODeL mission.

4.9.3 Implement business processes which will enable teaching, learning and support services to be offered in an optimal way through integrated, systemic planning processes.

4.10 Human resource provisioning and development

4.10.1 Staff complement

The University employs a sufficient number of academic, administrative and professional employees at the required level of competence and qualifications to ensure that the ODeL business model and systems operate optimally and provide continuous, consistent and quality service to the students.

4.10.2 Capacity development

The purpose of capacity development in the UNISA ODeL environment has short-term and long-term dimensions.

In the short term:

- a) to raise awareness of what ODeL is, its underpinning philosophy and how it fits into the wider scheme of UNISA as an ODeL institution.
- b) to engage with academic and support employees on the implementation of ODeL at UNISA.

In the longer term, a programme of continuous professional development is supported to:

- c) develop ODeL capacities of academic and support employees.
- d) promote convergence with institutional strategy, purpose and identity, and
- e) provide courses for ongoing employee development including support for research, scholarship and publication in ODeL in order to inform teaching and learning strategies, practices and outputs.

The capacity development for academic employees and allied professionals is outlined in the Framework for Professional Development.

4.11 Research

- a) UNISA is committed to scholarly teaching in ODeL as well as the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- b) UNISA views reflective research as an extremely important component of ODeL research.
- c) Through research UNISA will constantly reflect on all aspects of ODeL education provision in order to improve practice.

4.12 Academic collaborations

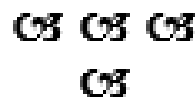
UNISA collaborates with distance education institutions in South Africa, Africa and internationally to make opportunities available for employees and students.

4.13 Quality assurance

All policies at UNISA are intended to underpin excellence in ODeL. Self and peer evaluation are practices for academic, administrative and professional units within the context of ODeL at programme and institutional levels and are outlined in the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

This Policy is in effect from the date on which Council approves this Policy.



² Integrated Quality Assurance Framework, Tuition Policy and its procedures Framework for the Implementation of a Team Approach to Curriculum and Learning Development

POLICY ON FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The University of South Africa (Unisa) intends to provide financial assistance to students on the basis of academic merit, financial need and any other requirements as set by individual donors.
- 1.2 Through this policy, Unisa undertakes to endeavour that no academically deserving and financial needy South African student is prohibited from studying with the university as a result of financial difficulties, as far as it is financially possible and meeting the donor criteria.
- 1.3 The provision of financial assistance is intended to contribute towards access to education and academic success for students enrolled for diplomas and degrees as included in the PQM. The approval and awarding of grants are subject to the availability of funds and donor criteria.
- 1.4 As prescribed in the donor agreement financial assistance in this regard will include, but is not limited to the payment of tuition fees, purchase of prescribed books, compulsory academic essentials as well as assistive devices for students with disabilities, practicals and research expenses which are an integral part of the approved programme of study.

2. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATION

Bursary	refers to that portion of the award that does not need to be repaid to the University or donor;
DHET	means the Department of Higher Education and Training;
<u>Disadvantaged students</u>	refer to students whose annual personal or household income falls within the annual means test;
Financial assistance	refers to funds awarded to students to assist them in cover all or part of their academic financial costs;
Means test	<u>is a NSFAS</u> tool used to determine the eligibility to qualify for financial assistance based on financial circumstances or affordability;
Merit award	is an award given to a student based on his/her academic achievement;
<u>Previously disadvantaged student</u>	refers to a student who matriculated from a Quantile 1 – 3 school as defined by DHET;
Study loan	refers to the money that the student borrows from institutions such as <u>NSFAS</u> and/or EduLoan to cover tuition and other specified

additional costs, and is required to be repaid by a student or parent.

3. TYPES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The following types of financial assistance are available to students and are managed and administered by the Division: Student Funding in the Finance Department.

3.1 Donor bursaries

Funds received through the Division: Development and Special Projects of the Directorate: Institutional Advancement, and from other sponsors, companies and organisations for purposes of assisting students with tuition and other related learning needs:

3.1.1 subject to specific requirements set by the donor, or

3.1.2 without any specific requirements.

3.2 Merit awards

Financial assistance which is awarded on the basis of excellent academic achievement. Merit awards will cover tuition and other learning essentials in part or in full, depending on the availability of funds.

3.3 National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

3.3.1 Students apply directly to NSFAS for financial assistance.

3.3.2 NSFAS selects successful applicants based on their criteria and supply UNISA with the list of provisionally selected students.

3.3.3 UNISA allocates awards and confirms registration to NSFAS.

3.4 UNISA bursary

These bursaries are awarded from UNISA funds to students who applied and who meet the criteria as set by each of the selection committees of the Individual bursaries.

3.5 External donors

3.5.1 External donors are private companies and/or National and Provincial Government Departments that donate funds to UNISA to be utilised for student bursaries based on criteria that meet their requirements.

3.5.2 Dependent on the agreement entered into with the donor, students are required to either apply directly to the donor or apply to UNISA.

a) When students apply directly to the donor, the donor sends the list of selected students to UNISA for processing.

b) When students apply directly to UNISA, a selection committee is established and selects students who best meet the criteria set by the donor.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In the administration of financial assistance, the following principles are applied:

4.1	Equity	
	Consistent and fair application of the criteria set by donors.	
4.2	Support for disadvantaged students	
	Financial assistance must be undertaken with an express view to help disadvantaged as well as previously disadvantaged students.	help
4.3	Donor agreed expectations and criteria	
	4.3.1 Available financial assistance must be used effectively and efficiently in line with the donor criteria.	
	4.3.2 Where no such criteria exist, the general criteria based on academic merit and financial need will be applied.	
4.4	Access to financial assistance	
	Financial assistance should be made accessible to all eligible, deserving and academically successful students, subject to availability of funds.	
4.5	Sustainability	
	Funding will be awarded responsibly to avoid wastage. A collegial relationship will be maintained with donors to facilitate continued funding.	
4.6	Availability of funds	
	Approval and award of grants are subject to the availability of funds. Unless otherwise decided by Management Committee of Unisa, the Student Funding Committee, which is composed of institution-wide and relevant stakeholders and role players decides on or confirms the forms of allocation of available funds.	
4.7	Application of means test	
	Where applicable, financial assistance will be granted after the application of a means test.	
4.8	Reporting	
	Reports on fund utilisation will be provided to the donors as agreed within individual donor agreements.	

5. ELIGIBILITY

Students' eligibility for funding is determined by the agreed criteria as set by individual donors.

6. APPLICATIONS

6.1 Where applicable (par 3.5.2) only completed applications submitted by the deadline will be considered for selection.

6.2 The applications received will be considered within reasonable time after the closing date for applications.

6.3 Information will be provided to students on how and where to apply for funding.

6.4 Funding will only be processed for students who have:

a) successfully applied

b) signed an agreement accepting the funding from either the donor or UNISA.

7. STRUCTURES

Where applicable, funding activities will be monitored by the relevant selection committee.

8. APPEALS

8.1 Where applicable, as per the agreement between UNISA and the donor, students who have applied for financial assistance and who are dissatisfied with the outcome will be provided with an avenue to appeal the decision.

8.2 Appeals will be dealt with in line with the fund structure and conditions and is dependent on the availability of funds.

9. AUDITING

The allocation of financial assistance shall be subject to an annual internal and/or external audit as part of the mandatory requirements.

10. POLICY REVIEW

This policy replaces the previously approved policy on financial assistance to students after approval by Council and its impact will be assessed on annual basis with a view to effect necessary amendments.

APPENDIX O: LETTER OF EDITOR

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING 14 January 2022

To whom it may concern:

This is to confirm that I have edited the following PhD thesis: *Perceptions of Senior Academics and Postgraduate Students on the Decolonisation of University Curriculum at a Distance e-Learning Institution in South Africa* by J Munyaradzi for language use. The page layout of the text remains the responsibility of the student.

Yours faithfully
E M Lemmer
864 Justice Mohamel Street
Brooklyn
Pretoria
ID 5107110118088





Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author:	Assignment title:	Submission title:	File name:
File size:	Page count:	Word count:	
Character count:	Submission date:		Submission ID:
Juliet Munyaradzi			
Revision 1			
perceptions of senior academics and postgraduate students...			
ED_THESIS_OF_JULIET_MUNYARADZI_FOR_EDITING_9_DECEM...			
348.84k			
234			
76,770			